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STUDIES IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

AN ARGUMENT

BY CHARLES H. ROBINSON, M.A.

HON. CANON OF RIPON AND EDITORIAL SECRETARY OF THE S.P.G.

"Think, when our one soul understands
The Great Word which makes all things new,
When earth breaks up and heaven expands,
How will the change strike me and you
In the house not made with hands?"

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PREFACE.

THE present volume originated in an attempt to write a supplementary chapter dealing with the Resurrection to insert in a new edition of "Studies in the Character of Christ". Although the argument for the Resurrection of Christ is, from the writer's point of view, entirely dependent upon a preliminary study of His character, it did not prove possible to develop this argument in any useful way within the limits of a single chapter. Hence the origin of this supplementary volume, in which an attempt has been made to consider the evidence for and against the Resurrection, as far as may be, from an impartial standpoint. Of the difficulties involved in this effort, the writer is not unconscious. For any one who admits that Christianity was the direct outcome of a belief in the Resurrection it is not easy to attempt a dispassionate investigation of a problem on the solution of which must depend his continued acceptance of the Christian

faith. The difficulty, however, involved in a dispassionate consideration of this question is not confined to those who believe in the Resurrection. For if on the one hand a desire to share in the results of Christ's Resurrection prejudices the judgment of some, a reluctance to accept these results and thereby to admit the obligation to lead the life of strenuous Christian service which their acceptance would entail, renders it equally difficult for others to approach the discussion with an unprejudiced mind. An impartial attitude of mind must be accompanied by a desire to live up to the ideal which the Resurrection of Christ would create, should a belief in its occurrence prove to be justifiable. Bishop Blougram's words may be taken as describing the qualification necessary for an impartial consideration of the evidence :—

What think ye of Christ, friend? When all's done
and said,
Like you this Christianity or not?
It may be false, but will you wish it true?
Has it your vote to be so if it can?

It is doubtless true to say that in some cases the wish has been father to the thought, and that a man's eager desire to believe in the existence of a resurrection life for himself has induced him to accept the fact of Christ's Resurrection

without sufficient study when he would not otherwise have done so. But over against such a case we must set the experience of the many thoughtful students whose attitude towards the Resurrection of Christ resembles that of the citizens of ancient Rome, as described by Dr. Arnold, who on receiving news of a critical victory, "dared not lightly believe what they so much wished to be true". There are others again, not a few, who would find it comparatively easy to believe in the Resurrection could they but forget some of the popular arguments which are used to establish its occurrence.

Although the Resurrection of Christ must be treated as a question of history, it cannot be relegated to the realm of historical speculation. For we cannot afford to leave in suspense a question on the answer to which our outlook on life and our whole course of action must directly depend. In view of the difficulties connected with the Resurrection of Christ there are many arguments which might seem to justify suspended judgment, but when, as in this case, belief and action are inseparable and suspended judgment involves suspended action, we can no longer dare to offer an excuse for refusing to give to the question the most careful thought of which our minds are capable.

We have not found it possible to keep altogether distinct the discussion of Christ's Resurrection and that of the resurrection of all men. The two are intimately connected, and the teaching contained in the New Testament in regard to the one so frequently throws light upon the other that they cannot be treated as separate questions. The main purpose, however, of this book is to discuss the Resurrection of Jesus Christ which is stated to have occurred on the first Easter morning.

CHARLES H. ROBINSON.

LIMPSFIELD,
February, 1909.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

A LARGER number of books and articles dealing with the subject of the Resurrection of Christ have been published within the last few years than during any similar period in the past. Those who from one cause or another have rejected the Christian faith, and who desire to justify to others their rejection of its claims or to warn them against accepting its teaching, have realised more clearly than before that the story of the Resurrection of Christ is a critical point alike in the attack and defence of Christianity. Hence the publication in cheap form of numerous books and pamphlets addressed to the people and written from an anti-Christian standpoint. In view of the wide circulation which these books have obtained it is to be regretted that many which have been written to controvert them and in defence of Christian belief have failed to do justice to the arguments which they have attempted to refute.

To one who has no positive belief in the inspiration of the New Testament it is singularly unconvincing to offer a series of texts containing dogmatic statements in regard to the Resurrection and its results, or to quote and re-quote the Gospel narratives. Moreover, the description by certain Christian apologists of the arguments which they offer in confirmation of their views as "unanswerable," "incontrovertible" or "triumphant," and still worse the suggestion that those who do not see the force of these arguments must be blind and prejudiced, creates a feeling of repulsion in the mind of many a seeker after truth who has a more intelligent appreciation of the difficulties involved in an acceptance of the Christian position than have the writers themselves.

If, as S. Paul believed, the Christian Faith stands or falls with the acceptance of the fact of Christ's Resurrection, and if those who reject the doctrine which is bound up with its belief may suffer a well-nigh irreparable loss, with what profound sense of responsibility, and with what anxious care not to misinterpret the motives and arguments of those to whom he desires to appeal, should the Christian apologist approach his task. Instead of prejudging the motives of those with whose opinions he disagrees, he will sympathise

with the words of a seeker after truth who has said : " It is quite as hard to think rightly as it is to act rightly, or even to feel rightly. . . . Men in general do not understand or appreciate the difficulty of finding truth. . . . All men are not compelled to make an independent search for truth, and those who voluntarily undertake to do so are always few. They ought, indeed, to find pity and charity when they fail, for their undertaking is full of hazard. . . . But they cannot expect such charity, for the hazards and difficulties of the undertaking are known to themselves alone. To the world at large it seems quite easy to find truth and inexcusable to miss it." ¹

The present volume is written from the standpoint of one to whom the difficulties involved in a belief in the Resurrection of Christ are very real, and to whom they would appear insuperable if the evidence which is available in its support were put forward in order to prove the resurrection of any ordinary man.² He finds it easy to understand that those to whom a study of the character of Christ carries no conviction of the truth of the claims which are made on His behalf in the Gospel records, should regard the evidence for the fact of His Resurrection as in-

¹ " Ecce Homo," p. 69 *sq.*

² See pp. 28, 37.

sufficient. To such he does not pretend to offer any unanswerable argument on its behalf. The question which he has tried to answer is not, Can all objections to the alleged fact of the Resurrection be answered? but, Are there more difficulties in the way of believing in the Resurrection or of disbelieving? Does the venture of faith which, after all the arguments have been considered, is still required to accept the Gospel story, involve greater or less difficulties than are involved in its rejection? He writes under the conviction that a candid examination of all that can be urged for and against the occurrence of the Resurrection tends to show that the difficulties of disbelief are greater than those of belief.

The position of the Christian apologist to-day is very different from that which S. Paul occupied. He could allege the fact of the Resurrection as a proof that Christ was the Son of God. The modern apologist has no opportunities, such as existed at the time when S. Paul wrote, of cross-examining those who had seen Christ after His Resurrection. Though he may be but little less certain of the fact than was S. Paul, he has reached this certainty by a less direct path than that which was open to him, and he cannot rest the superstructure of his faith upon this belief. In endeavouring to commend his faith to others

he cannot allege the fact of the Resurrection as a primary proof of the divinity of Christ, but he will rather urge the divine nature of Christ, which he will endeavour to establish by other evidence, as a proof that the Resurrection cannot be regarded as *a priori* inconceivable.

There are a large number of people in the present day who are content to do their thinking by proxy. As Bishop Westcott has said, "Nothing is more common than to be told by easy talkers that this is impossible and that that has been disproved, when a very little inquiry will show that these doubters upon trust have never even seriously attempted to examine the conditions of the problems which they presume to decide".¹ There is no subject which demands more careful and independent thought, if an intelligent faith is to be attained, than the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For His Resurrection cannot rightly be considered as an isolated event in history, nor can the direct evidence which is available to establish its occurrence be estimated apart from other considerations. Professor Romanes in reply to the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" says, "I think the wise Christian will

¹ "The Revelation of the Risen Lord," p. 104.

answer, 'I believe in the resurrection of the dead, partly on grounds of reason, partly on those of intuition, but chiefly on both combined ; so to speak, it is my whole character which accepts the whole system of which the doctrine of personal immortality forms an essential part ' ".¹

Inasmuch as the Christian revelation makes its appeal to the whole man, a moral as well as an intellectual preparation is needed for its apprehension. We are far from suggesting that moral blame attaches to all who fail to appreciate the evidence for the Resurrection of Christ as it presents itself to their minds ; but at the same time when we think of our own experience, and not of the case of those whose belief differs from ours, we cannot deny that there has often been a connection between moral and intellectual difficulties.

" Any man who begins to think that it means less to him than once it did, would do well to enquire very carefully which of the two consilient forces in the act of faith is really failing : whether the weight of external evidence for the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has been certainly and seriously impaired ; or whether, on the other hand, any elements, instincts, powers,²

¹ "Thoughts on Religion," p. 145.

² Cf. words of Dr. Martineau, " every faculty gives insight, every incapacity entails blindness ".

senses, in his own inner being presumed and addressed by Christianity, have faded into listlessness or swerved aside to some unworthy aim, or been bewildered and neglected in the speed and stress of life.”¹

The student who approaches the study of the Resurrection with an unprepared mind must expect to find the difficulties which it raises insoluble. If he is to do justice to the evidence which is available on its behalf, he must first come into sympathetic contact with Jesus Christ. He must meditate long and deeply upon His character portrayed in the Gospels, with the desire and resolve to see that character reproduced in himself. He must follow the story of that Life from Bethlehem to Calvary, and when at last he finds himself standing by the empty tomb with Christ's own prophecy of His Resurrection engraven on his mind, he, like Christ's apostle of old, will be in a position to see and believe.

¹ Bishop F. Paget, “Faculties and Difficulties,” p. 12.

II.

THE RESURRECTION BODY.

BEFORE attempting a consideration of the evidence available for the Resurrection of Christ, it is necessary to form a clear conception of what the word resurrection implies. There are three different ways in which the word resurrection, as applied to Christ, has been interpreted.

(a) Some have been content to regard the Resurrection of Christ as synonymous with the resurrection or revival of His spiritual influence on the minds and hearts of His disciples, which had been temporarily interrupted by His death. They have accepted this as a fulfilment of Christ's promise, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you".¹

Dr. Lock referring to a belief of this kind says : " If this were all, a very great reality would remain in that unconscious influence of the dead upon the living which is one of the chief factors that have gone to the making of religion through-

¹ S. John xiv. 18.

out the world, probably one of the strongest elements which has deepened our own individual faith. When once we have entered within the circle of religious faith, the antithesis of all or nothing has no meaning ; the only real antithesis is between much and more. Much would still remain that would be of real help for this life : and yet to most minds this will appear a faith as 'vague as all unsweet'." ¹

It is obvious too that such an interpretation of the word resurrection cannot be reconciled with the testimony of the writers of the New Testament or with the apparently unanimous belief of the early Christian Church.

(*b*) Others again, who have held a belief far removed from this, have maintained that Christ's body was in the most literal sense resuscitated and that His Resurrection body was composed of matter which in no essential respect differed from that of which His body consisted prior to His death.

The advocates of this view refer to the quotation from Ps. xvi. which S. Peter applied to Christ : "Thou wilt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption," ² and to the statement

¹ Sermon before the University of Oxford, by W. Lock, May 3, 1908.

² Acts ii. 27, 31 ; see p. 59.

by S. Luke¹ that after His Resurrection Christ ate a piece of fried fish² in order to convince His disciples of the reality of His presence with them. They further allege as an argument in support of this view that the disappearance of the material body of Christ from the tomb in which it had been laid necessarily implies the physical continuity of this body with that which was seen by the disciples after His Resurrection.

It cannot be denied that a belief in the resuscitation of Christ's material body was practically universal in early and mediæval times. Most of the books which have been written in recent years with the object of disproving the fact of Christ's Resurrection proceed on the assumption that this is still the belief of all Christians. Thus the writer of "The First Easter Dawn," issued for the Rationalistic Press Association³ says: "We, in the twentieth century, are asked to believe that Jesus returned to physical life"; and again, "the Resurrection is claimed to have been . . . an actual resuscitation and reappearance of a physical body". So far, however, is it from being the case that all Christians believe in the physical resuscitation

¹ xxiv. 42.

² See p. 72.

³ "The First Easter Dawn," an Inquiry into the Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus, by C. T. Gorham, p. 65.

of Christ, that many of the most thoughtful representatives of the Christian faith have definitely repudiated this belief. Thus Bishop Westcott, after maintaining that Christ did not return to the natural life, says : " This fact seems to me to involve the essence of the whole revelation of the Risen Christ. . . . If the post-resurrection life of Jesus was really like our own—carried on, that is to say in a body provided with heart and lungs and other organs performing their functions as ours do—then the Resurrection would tell us nothing whatever about another life, or about a spiritual existence of a different order from our own."¹

Dr. Latham² writes : " What connection was there between the body that disappeared from the tomb and the body that the disciples were invited to handle? This, I believe, we cannot understand till we get out of the body ourselves."

Dr. Milligan³ writes : " The fundamental proposition of the present lectures " is " that the body with which our Lord rose from the grave, though still a true body, was not the same as that with which He died ". And again : " In the light of the collected statements of Scripture

¹ " The Revelation of the Risen Lord," p. 67 *sq.*

² " The Risen Master," p. 73.

³ " The Resurrection of Our Lord," p. 31.

upon the point it cannot be successfully maintained that the very body which hung upon the cross and was laid in the grave rose again from the dead".¹

In view of the representative character of the writers just quoted it can no longer be maintained that the acceptance of the Christian creed necessarily involves the acceptance of a belief that the resurrection body of Christ was of a physical or material nature, or that the act of resurrection involved a resuscitation of His former body.

The general prevalence in the early Church of the contrary view was in part due to the crude conceptions of the nature of matter then entertained, and in part to a natural anxiety to state the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection in terms which would guard converts from any tendency towards doceticism or gnosticism.

(c) According to the third theory (which is practically that accepted by Bishop Westcott) the Resurrection of Christ was an objective reality, but was not a physical resuscitation. In support of this view it may be urged that if, as S. Paul argues, Christ was the "first-fruits" of the Resurrection, and His Resurrection was the pledge and assurance of our own resurrection, the conclusion appears to be obvious that the Resurrection of

¹ "The Resurrection of Our Lord," p. 11.

the Son of Man can no more be rightly regarded as material or physical than can the resurrection of all other men. The belief was widespread in early times that the material bodies of Christians would one day be literally resuscitated and would rise from their graves in a form visible to material eyesight. Thus Jerome, arguing from the statement "the very hairs of your head are all numbered," held that there would be a restoration of the bones, veins, nerves, teeth and hair. Modern science, by showing that the particles of matter of which our present bodies are composed have previously formed part of the bodies of other beings, has rendered such a belief impossible. It has been computed that since the appearance of man upon earth at least a hundred and fifty thousand million human beings have died. If a future resurrection should involve any movement of matter, many hundreds of persons would have to claim possession of the same particles of matter. Were we to admit that the particles of matter of which a body is composed at the time of its owner's death will be used up again or reanimated at the general resurrection, we should have to answer a somewhat repulsive question which is raised by the practice of cannibalism. In the general resurrection who will be entitled to lay claim to the particles of matter

which have formed part both of the bodies of cannibals and of their victims? The only possible answer is that such a question will never need to be answered, because the resurrection will not involve any reanimation or movement of the particles of matter of which our bodies are composed. A further proof that the general resurrection will not involve the resuscitation of the particles of matter which may have belonged to any particular body at the moment of death is afforded by the comparatively recent discovery that the body is in a constant state of flux and that its composition does not remain the same for two consecutive moments. It becomes therefore impossible to suppose that the particles of matter of which a body happens to be composed at the actual moment of death can by the occurrence of death be rendered immortal. What is immortal is not the matter of which the body is composed, but what Bishop Westcott has called the formula of which man's body is the outward expression. Thus he writes : " We cannot understand by body simply a particular aggregation of matter, but an aggregation of matter as representing in one form the action of a particular law, or rather the realisation of a special formula. The specific law or formula of assimilation and combination is that which is really essential and permanent.

The same material elements may enter into a thousand bodies ; . . . with regard to man, there is nothing unnatural in supposing that the power which preserves his personality, by acting according to the individual law of his being in moulding the continuous changes of his present material body and all that depends upon it, will preserve his personality hereafter by still acting according to the same law in moulding the new element (so to speak) out of which a future body may be fashioned.”¹

As we bear these words of Bishop Westcott in mind we may best try to explain to ourselves the expressions relating to the resurrection of the flesh or the body which are found in our Church’s creeds.

The expression “the resurrection of the flesh” which occurs in the interrogatory form of the Apostles’ Creed used in the Baptismal Service in the Prayer Book, formed part of the old Roman Creed. In the ordinary form of the Apostles’ Creed we have “the resurrection of the body” and in the Nicene Creed “the resurrection of the dead”. The first is not a Scriptural expression. It cannot be denied that many of the early Christians believed, as Jerome did, that at the general resurrection there would be a revivifica-

¹ “The Gospel of the Resurrection,” p. 144 f.

tion of all the material particles of which the human body was composed, including the flesh, bones, hair and blood. The creeds used by the Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Nestorian Churches contain simply the words "the resurrection of the dead". At the time when the expression "resurrection of the flesh" was inserted in the Roman Creed a special need existed, in view of the existence of teaching which tended to cast doubt upon the reality of the Resurrection, to emphasise the fact that the acceptance of the Christian faith involved a belief in the continuance of human personality and identity after death. In an age when physical science had hardly come to the birth, and when a man would have been excommunicated or put to death as a heretic had he ventured to suggest that the particles of matter of which his body was composed might already have formed part of the bodies of others who had lived and died before him, the only way by which a belief in the preservation of human identity could be expressed in unambiguous terms was by the use of the language which was adopted in the creed. The significance of the language employed has been greatly modified by lapse of time and growth of knowledge, but the belief which the expression was framed to express is still the belief of the Christian Church ; and though

we may regard the words as inappropriate to express this belief and may even desire to see them altered, nevertheless as long as we share this belief we can continue to use them without intellectual dishonesty.

To return to our former argument ; if, therefore, it be admitted that the future resurrection of all men will not involve any movement or displacement of matter or the restitution of their physical life, it becomes difficult for those who accept S. Paul's argument to assert that any similar change occurred in the case of Christ. To maintain the contrary would be to deny that Christ was in any real sense the "first-fruits" of the general resurrection, a statement on which (as we shall see later on) S. Paul grounds his argument for the general resurrection. Those, however, who do not believe in the physical resuscitation of Christ's body, but who accept the Gospel records of the Resurrection, are confronted with a serious difficulty. S. Luke, S. Matthew and S. John state, and S. Mark implies, that the tomb of Christ was found empty. To many thoughtful persons there is no greater difficulty connected with a belief in the Resurrection of Christ than that which is involved in this statement. They argue thus : If our future resurrection, which we believe will be

in all respects as real as that of Christ, will not involve an empty tomb, how can we explain such a statement in regard to His Resurrection.

A singularly foolish book was published a few years ago entitled "When it was Dark," in which the writer sought to show that the continued existence of Christianity depends upon a belief in an empty tomb; and further maintained that if evidence could be produced to show that the first disciples were mistaken in their belief that the act of resurrection had caused the disappearance from the tomb of Christ's material body, and that the body had been removed by human instrumentality prior to the arrival of the women, Christianity and Christian morality would come to an abrupt end. So far is this contention from being valid, that if a belief in an empty tomb were no longer to be regarded as indispensable to a belief in the reality and genuineness of the Resurrection of Christ, some who are now unable to believe in His Resurrection would find it comparatively easy to do so.

There are two ways by which those who have felt the difficulty involved in the story of the empty tomb have sought to avoid it.

(a) On the one hand, some who believe most strongly in the reality of Christ's Resurrection, have been constrained to assume that the state-

ments in the Gospels to the effect that the tomb was found empty, and the statements in the Gospels and the Acts that Christ was seen to eat and drink after His Resurrection, must be regarded as incorrect traditions which, though embodied by the evangelists in their records, were originally inferences drawn by the earliest Christians from the assured fact of the Resurrection rather than actual historical incidents. They point to the fact that when S. Paul was recalling to the Corinthians the proofs of Christ's Resurrection he makes no mention of the fact that the tomb was found empty, though, had he been aware that it was so, he could hardly have failed to adduce this as a crowning proof of his assertion. Though we are not prepared to say that this view is inconsistent with any belief in Christ's Resurrection, it nevertheless casts such serious discredit upon the documentary evidence contained in the New Testament that it is hard to believe that the Resurrection of Christ could continue to be generally believed, or to exercise the inspiring influence which it has exercised ever since the Christian era, if this explanation were accepted.

(b) Others, again, who have felt the difficulty involved in the materialistic explanation of the Resurrection which the doctrine of the empty

tomb appears to involve, and who cannot set aside the documentary evidence which exists in support of it, have assumed the performance of a special miracle, which was not necessary to the accomplishment of Christ's Resurrection, but apart from which the fact of its occurrence would never have been believed. Had not the tomb been found empty and had not Christ offered to His disciples evidence of His Resurrection which would appeal to their material senses, it is impossible to suppose that even His repeated appearances and intercourse with them would have sufficed to establish either in their minds or in the minds of others a belief in the reality of His resurrection. Those who adopt this view would maintain that the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre and that the body of Christ was caused to disappear, not to provide material for the spiritual body, but in order to render it possible for His disciples to believe in the reality of His spiritual body. In a volume of sermons published by Bishop Horsley, in 1815, the writer maintained that the stone was rolled away from the tomb "not to let the Lord out, but to let the women in".¹ If it be admitted that the stone was rolled away by other than human agency

¹ "Nine Sermons on the Nature of the Evidence by which the Fact of Our Lord's Resurrection is Established," p. 202.

for the confirmation of the faith of the disciples, there would be no insuperable objection to the extension of the miracle so as to include the disappearance of the body, the object of the miracle in either case being the same.

(c) If this suggestion be regarded as inadmissible it may be urged that we know so little of the extent to which spirit can dominate matter, that we may well hesitate to regard it as impossible that a spirit which could assume different forms and could suddenly appear within closed doors could not assume a form which was capable of being touched and could not act upon material food in such a way as to cause its disappearance.

Again, it may be urged that inasmuch as the fleshly body of Christ was untainted by evil and was, prior to the crucifixion, completely dominated by His spirit, when the soul and spirit were withdrawn from it, it would not be unnatural to expect that there should be nothing left behind. It may be argued that, whilst in our case the "redemption of the body"¹ can only be accomplished by laying aside the flesh altogether, in the case of the perfect Man no such redemption was needed, inasmuch as the divine spirit which was given to Him "without measure" would have so completely penetrated the material

¹ Rom. viii. 23.

body that the absence of the one would necessarily cause the absence of the other. One difficulty involved in this explanation is that were it true, we should have expected that Christ's material body would have disappeared at the moment of His death. Our ignorance, however, of the manner and extent of the penetration of matter by spirit is so profound that it does not seem inconceivable that this difficulty may be more apparent than real. To some it has appeared to be not altogether inconceivable that the belief of the Jews¹ and other peoples that the complete separation of soul and body did not occur at the moment of death but after an interval of three days rested upon some basis of truth. Were this hypothesis admissible, it might then be possible to suggest that the completion of the process which we call death synchronised with the disappearance of the material body of Christ from the tomb.

S. Paul declares that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. It seems therefore impossible to suppose that he believed the Resurrection body of Christ to have been a resuscitation of His flesh and blood.

It is true that we do not understand, and S. Paul does not explain, the nature of the "spiritual

¹ See p. 60.

body,"¹ which should eventually replace the material body, and which was not to emerge from the earth but to come "from heaven";² but whatever be the difficulty of forming any conception of its nature, the thought which it is used to express is easier to grasp than is that of the resurrection of matter.

One assumption which is frequently made in regard to the Resurrection of Christ appears to raise an unnecessary obstacle to belief. We refer to the statement that the Resurrection must necessarily be regarded as an altogether supernatural occurrence³ and a complete interruption of the laws of nature brought about on this solitary occasion by the direct intervention of God. This statement, which is often made by those who have striven to defend the truth of the Resurrection, is naturally accepted and made a chief ground of attack by those who write from the opposite standpoint.

Thus Professor Orr, who writes in defence of the Christian position,⁴ quotes the following words from P. Sabatier, the biographer of Francis of

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 44.

² See 2 Cor. v. 2: "our habitation which is from heaven".

³ For discussion of the question whether the beings whom the women saw in the empty tomb were men or angels, see Appendix C.

⁴ "The Expositor," Feb., 1908, p. 151.

Assisi : " If by miracle we understand either the suspension or subversion of the laws of nature or the intervention of the First Cause in certain particular cases, I could not concede it ". He then adds : " The application of this axiom to . . . such a fact as the Resurrection naturally lays the history, as we possess it, in ruins. There is no need, really, for investigation of evidence ; the question is decided before the evidence is looked at." Again he writes :¹ " An unequivocal step is taken into the region of the supernatural. Naturalism, or supernaturalism, there is no escape from the alternative presented."

It appears to us that to write thus is gratuitously to offer to those who do not believe in the Resurrection a strong reason for continuing to disbelieve. Very many believers in the fact of Christ's Resurrection would agree rather with the words of Professor Sanday, who says : " We are modern men and cannot divest ourselves of our modernity. . . . I would not ask any one to divest himself of those ideas which we all naturally bring with us. I mean our ideas as to the uniformity of the ordinary course of nature."² Whatever definition we may ourselves give to the word miraculous as applied to the Resurrec-

¹ " The Expositor," Feb., 1908, p. 330 f.

² " The Life of Christ in Recent Research," p. 204.

tion, it is impossible to admit that those who believe in the fact of the Resurrection but who take a different view of the meaning of miracles from that which we have adopted, thereby abandon a belief in the Resurrection. A generation ago it would have been asserted by most Christian apologists that to suggest any kind of explanation of the way in which Christ cured the sick who came to Him for healing was virtually to deny His divinity or, to use the expressive words quoted above, to "lay the Gospel history in ruins". Modern investigation has now shown that it is possible for one to affect the health of another by the action of his will without any material intervention; and it is coming to be admitted that One who was perfect man and who possessed all the powers which a divine Being who was subject to human limitations could conceivably possess, without overstepping these self-imposed limitations, might be able to work "miracles" of healing without suspending or subverting any of the laws of nature. "Jesus Himself," said Archbishop Whateley, "describes His works not as violations of the laws of nature, but as 'works which none other men did'." It is not inconceivable that a generation hence it will be generally admitted that One who was perfect man, and in whose case the material body was

completely interpenetrated by His spiritual faculties, might have accomplished the "miracle" of the Resurrection without any interference with the laws of nature.

In the following chapters this third explanation of the nature of Christ's Resurrection body will be assumed to be true. The writer believes that the Resurrection of Christ was an objective reality and that He verily and indeed rose again from the dead and was seen by His disciples, but that after His Resurrection He possessed not a material but a spiritual body, of which the essential nature was the same as that of the bodies with which we shall be endued when we are not only "freed from the burden of the flesh," but "clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven".¹

¹ 2 Cor. v. 2.

III.

CHRIST'S OWN TESTIMONY.

THERE are three lines of evidence which converge to support the fact of Christ's Resurrection. The first, and that which appears to us the strongest, is one which, from the nature of the case, can only appeal to a limited number of persons. It can, indeed, only affect those to whom the character of Christ has already made a convincing appeal. Those who, as the result of a prolonged study of His character, are led to believe that He was entirely truthful and that He possessed a knowledge of God's will such as no other human being has ever possessed, will be prepared to admit that there can exist no stronger proof for the fact of the Resurrection than His own assertion that such would occur. It is not reasonable to expect that to one to whom the character of Christ makes little appeal or who regards Him as differing in no important respect from other good religious teachers, the evidence which can be adduced in support of His Resurrection

will appear sufficient. If the evidence afforded by the documents contained in the New Testament were to be advanced as a proof that any ordinary man had risen from the dead after three days, such evidence would not appear to us to be convincing. One reason why the indignant repudiation of the Gospel story of the Resurrection contained in such books as "God and My Neighbour" has seemed to many who have rejected the Christian faith not to exceed the limits of fair criticism, is that they have tried, and in most cases have honestly tried, to place themselves in the position of a judge who should be called upon to receive or reject similar evidence which might be offered to substantiate the resurrection of a fellow-man in all respects similar to themselves. The arguments for the Resurrection of Christ cannot be rightly appreciated until some adequate conception has been gained of the character of Him who is alleged to have risen.

We cannot attempt now to give a sketch of the argument for the divine authority of Christ which may be based upon a careful examination of His existing portrait. A few sentences will suffice to summarise the chief points of the argument as we have tried to develop it elsewhere.

In the character of Christ portrayed in the Gospels we have a combination which has never

been seen elsewhere of divine repose with strenuous activity, of unparalleled self-assertion with transparent humility, of conscious power with superhuman self-restraint in the use of this power, of intellectual majesty with unaffected simplicity of expression, of feminine gentleness and grace with masculine resolution and strength, of ineffable dignity with sympathetic love, and of passionate enthusiasm with exhaustless patience. The more carefully the character of the Founder of Christianity is studied, the more possible does it seem to base the whole argument for the truth of this religion upon the actual existence of the portrait of His character. Objections derived from historical criticism or from the assumed impossibility of miracles avail nothing against this argument; for if we should accept the assertion that the Gospels are unhistorical, or that they were not written by their supposed authors, even while we do so, we are confronted with the insoluble problem of one or more unknown writers creating and setting forth the only conception of a perfect character which the world has known. We may regard the accounts of the miracles, and of the Resurrection in particular, as placing too great a strain upon our credulity; but in rejecting the lesser miracles we are left to explain the greatest of them all—the existence

of the portrait of Christ. We are left to explain how some unknown Jews, who belonged to the narrowest and most bigoted sect which has perhaps ever existed, living in an age which was intensely superstitious, invented a character free from local bias, party prejudice and current superstition ; a character which was so far in advance of their own age, that though eighteen centuries of progress lie between us and them, we feel that He is almost as much in advance of our own time as He was of theirs. We believe that a perfectly fair and unprejudiced study of the character of Christ as portrayed in the New Testament will in the vast majority of cases lead the student to endorse the words of the French writer Rousseau : " The Gospel has marks of truth so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor of it would be more astonishing than the hero ".

If then it be admitted that the existence of the Gospel portrait of Christ is sufficient proof that it was drawn from life, and that He who is there portrayed laid claim to no knowledge affecting the outcome of His work which He did not possess, it must also be admitted that if He definitely stated that He would rise again from the dead, we have a strong *a priori* ground for believing that He did so rise.

The question then presents itself, Can we be reasonably sure that any statements in regard to His own Resurrection formed an integral part of the teaching of Christ? It will, naturally, be suggested that we have only the statements of the writers of the Gospels to prove that Christ foretold His own Resurrection; and that inasmuch as the Gospels were written long after the story of His Resurrection had become current, it is possible that they may have misinterpreted some of His sayings, and may have attributed to Him an unequivocal prophecy of His Resurrection which He did not really make.

Were the references which are said to have been made by Christ to His Resurrection confined to one or two isolated passages, the suggestion would deserve careful consideration: but this is far from being the case. Each of the evangelists ascribes to Christ on several different occasions a definite declaration that He would die and after a short interval rise again.¹ Moreover, these references to the Resurrection form so essential a part of the teaching in which they are embedded that it is impossible to regard them as

¹ S. Matt. xii. 38-40, xvi. 21, xvii. 23, xx. 19, xxvii. 63; S. Mark viii. 31, ix. 31, x. 34, xiv. 58; S. Luke ix. 22, xviii. 33; S. John ii. 19-21.

an addition to it.¹ We do not ourselves doubt that Christ foretold that He would rise again on the third day, but as the variations which occur in the actual words of His prophecy which are reported by the writers of the different Gospels, have been a difficulty to many, it would be well to consider in some detail the significance of these variations.

There are two occasions on which He is reported to have fixed a limit to the time which should elapse between His death and His resurrection. S. Matthew² relates that when "certain of the scribes and Pharisees" said to Him, "Master, we would see a sign from thee," He replied, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth". If this prophecy be correctly attributed to Him, and if it admits of any literal interpretation, we must suppose that the expression "three days and three nights" was used by Him to denote a brief but indefinite space of time. The Jews frequently used the numbers three, seven or ten, when no exact enumeration

¹ Even Professor Schmiedel writes in regard to Christ's prediction that He would rise again in three days: "It must be recognised that He may very well, at one time or another, have expressed Himself in some such sense".

²xii. 39 f.

was intended. Another explanation has been adopted by several recent commentators who hold that this prophecy represents not the actual words used by Christ, but S. Matthew's amplification or explanation of Christ's reference to Jonah. The words do not occur in the parallel passage in S. Luke (xi. 29). If this explanation be admissible, the difficulty of harmonizing the statement of Christ in this passage with the statements attributed to Him elsewhere disappears.

On another occasion referred to by S. Mark¹ and S. John² Christ is represented as foretelling His Resurrection after, or within, three days. S. Mark, moreover, relates that one of the charges brought against Christ when He was on His trial in the presence of the High Priest was that He had declared that He would destroy the temple made with hands and within three days³ would build one made without hands.

This charge and the statement attributed by S. Matthew to the chief priests and Pharisees, and addressed to Pilate, "This deceiver said after three days I will rise,"⁴ were apparently founded on the words recorded by S. John,⁵ who says

¹ xiv. 56. ² ii. 19, 21.

³ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν, S. Mark xiv. 58.

⁴ xxvii. 63, μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας.

⁵ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις.

that Christ "speaking of the temple of his body" said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up". On a third occasion which is referred to by each of the synoptists, S. Mark states that He foretold His Resurrection "after three days,"¹ whilst S. Matthew and S. Luke state that He foretold it "on the third day".² Where variations occur in the report of words attributed to Christ by the synoptists, it is generally wise to assume that S. Mark represents the older and more accurate tradition. It has been urged that the Jews would have regarded the expressions "after three days" and "until the third day" as interchangeable; as according to S. Matthew they said to Pilate, "we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, *after three days* I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure *until the third day*." Even if the force of this argument be admitted, it fails to explain the quite definite statement, the Son of man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. There is one occasion referred to by S. Luke³ on which Christ used the expression "the third day" where it is impossible to give to the

¹ S. Mark viii. 31.

² S. Matt. xvi. 21; S. Luke ix. 22.

³ xiii. 32.

words any literal interpretation. When He was warned by the Pharisees that Herod desired to kill Him, He replied, "Behold, I cast out devils and perform cures to-day and to-morrow and the third day I am perfected". The "third day" was here used to denote a short but indefinite space of time. In this particular case it could not have denoted less than a week.

We are far from suggesting that Christ did not know that in three days (or rather in a day and a half) He would rise again from the dead; but, in view of the different statements which are attributed to Him and of the difficulty of reconciling them with the accounts of the Resurrection, it does not seem fair to press in support of the assertion that Christ rose again on the third day the statements attributed to Him which have been referred to above. But though we may not be altogether certain that Christ knew beforehand the length of time which should elapse between His death and His manifestation to the disciples in His resurrection body, we can be reasonably certain that He knew and definitely foretold that He would rise again within a brief space of time: and for the purpose of our argument this is all that we need to affirm. If we can be assured that Christ foretold His Resurrection, and if at the same time the study of His character as revealed

to us by the existing Gospel portrait of Him, should convince us that there was no limitation to the knowledge which He possessed, and which was necessary for the accomplishment of His divine Mission, we shall probably be led to regard His own statement as to His Resurrection as convincing evidence that it occurred.

There is a further argument in support of the occurrence of the Resurrection which is based upon the existing portraiture of Christ which will appeal to some. Although history affords no warrant for supposing that Providence will interfere in a visible way, even in cases of extremest need, to redress wrongs or to "justify the ways of God to man," there are many who will feel that if the mocking taunt of the priests and elders, "He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he desireth him,"¹ had been left unanswered as far as human knowledge extended, the "ways of God" would be dark and inscrutable indeed. It does not seem unreasonable to expect that God should vindicate in some striking and exceptional manner One who had trusted in Him completely and who could truthfully say of Himself "I do always those things that please him".²

"We have ever to remember of whose Resur-

¹ S. Matt. xxvii. 43, R.V.

² S. John viii. 29.

rection it is that we are speaking. It is not of the resurrection of any ordinary man. Putting aside all questions of His divinity, it is yet the resurrection of one who had done nothing amiss, in whom a Roman judge could find no fault, of one who spake as never man spoke, of one who in the judgment of those who had known Him best never knew sin : of one in whose case we should expect something more than in the case of ordinary men."¹

¹ W. Lock, "Sermon before the University of Oxford," May 3, 1908.

IV.

THE RESULTS OF THE RESURRECTION.

" BELIEF expressed in action is, for the most part, the strongest evidence we can have of any historic event."¹ If these words of Bishop Westcott are true, it may fairly be claimed that the evidence for the fact of the Resurrection is exceptionally strong. Whether it be admitted or no that Christ rose again, it cannot be denied that the existence of the Christian Church to-day, which nominally includes 500,000,000 of the human race, is a direct result of the belief in His Resurrection on the part of His earliest followers. For a belief in the Resurrection of Christ has formed an essential part of the Church's creed ever since the day of Pentecost. Those who have found it difficult to regard this as evidence of the Resurrection have pointed to the fact that there are other stories, such as Mohammed's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem in the course

¹ Westcott, " Gospel of the Resurrection," p. 104.

of a single night, and certain miraculous occurrences related in connection with the first promulgation of Buddhism, which are accepted by millions of human beings to-day, but which nevertheless we receive with incredulity. Why should we allow ourselves to be prejudiced in favour of a belief in the Resurrection by the fact that it is accepted by many millions of our fellow-men, when we are not prepared to accept evidence of a similar nature for occurrences which are less intrinsically improbable? Our answer is this. In regard to the miraculous journey which Mohammed claimed to have accomplished in a single night, although many millions of his followers profess to accept it as true, neither this nor any other miraculous story formed part of the creed of Islam for which its followers were prepared to sacrifice their lives. The same may be said of the miracles connected with Buddhism and the other great religions of the world. No religion other than Christianity which has exercised a large influence on the world has depended for its promulgation upon a belief in any supernatural occurrence, or upon any event which could be compared with the Resurrection of Christ. The miracles which are now attributed to their founders were either of the nature of subjective visions, such as Mohammed's visit to

Jerusalem, or were first attributed to them centuries after the religions which they inaugurated had begun to spread ; and in no instance was a belief in them essential to the acceptance of any particular creed.

The Christian faith on the contrary was founded upon the definite conviction that Christ had risen from the dead and had appeared again to His disciples : and it was because His followers were convinced of the reality of His Resurrection that they were prepared to lay down their lives for His sake. The evidence which is afforded for the truth of the Resurrection by the apparent results which have followed it differs both in kind and in degree from that which can be adduced in support of any other miracle in the history of the past.

A simple but effective means by which any thoughtful person may form a conception of the problem created by the present existence of the Christian Church on the assumption that Christ did not rise again from the dead, is afforded by the acting of the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau. As the play comes to an end, the disciples are scattered in fear ; and, as the long-drawn agony of the final scenes draws towards its close the spectator instinctively feels that it is impossible to resist a feeling of despair, or to shake off

the impression that the life of Christ has ended in completest failure. Even the knowledge that the Crucifixion was but the prelude to the Resurrection does not avail to prevent this impression from becoming paramount. As the curtain drops upon the scene of Christ's burial, he will not improbably feel, as the writer of these pages felt, that great as the difficulty in believing in the Resurrection of Christ or of understanding how it occurred undoubtedly is, the difficulty of conceiving how the Christian Church came into existence, if Christ did not rise, is yet greater.

Of all the hypotheses that have been suggested to account for the origin of the Christian Church, there is hardly any so improbable as that which assumes that Christ never really died, but that He swooned and afterwards recovered. Professor Huxley was so impressed with the difficulty of accounting for the origin of the Christian Church, apart from the assumption that Christ appeared to His disciples after the crucifixion, that he was constrained to accept this hypothesis. His doing so is a testimony to the difficulty felt by an earnest and candid thinker in accounting for the origin of Christianity apart from the fact of the Resurrection.

The same suggestion is put forward by Mr. Blatchford, the editor of the "Clarion," who says,

"What evidence is forthcoming that Christ did not recover from a swoon, and that His friends did not take Him away in the night?"¹

The best reply which can be given to this suggestion may be expressed in the words which Strauss wrote concerning it. "It is evident that this view of the Resurrection of Jesus, apart from the difficulties in which it is involved, does not even solve the problem which is here under consideration—the origin, that is, of the Christian Church by faith in the miraculous resurrection of a Messiah. It is impossible that a being who had stolen half dead out of the sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening, and indulgence, and who still at last yielded to His sufferings, could have given to His disciples the impression that He was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life—an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry."²

It is difficult to understand the position of some popular opponents of the Christian faith, who, whilst brushing aside with contempt the belief of countless millions of intelligent men who have preceded them, claim that the truth of their own

¹ "God and My Neighbour," p. 95.

² "New Life of Jesus," i., 412.

opinions must be self-evident to every unbiassed mind. Thus Mr. R. Blatchford, in "God and My Neighbour," says that "the Christians have the zealous service and unswerving credence of millions of honest and worthy citizens,"¹ and yet elsewhere he says, "The Christian religion is untrue from end to end, from bottom to top. It has not a solid reason to stand upon." It seems to us a libel on human intelligence to assert that no solid reasons can be adduced in support of a creed or any article of a creed which has obtained "the unswerving credence of millions of honest men". If it be suggested that millions of Romans, Greeks and Hindus have accepted mythological stories about their gods which are not only untrue but immoral, it may be replied that these stories formed no part of the creed which lay at the bottom of their religious convictions, and that they were ignored or rejected by their most intelligent thinkers. The opposite is the case in regard to the belief in the Resurrection. From the time of S. Paul downwards it has formed part of the creed alike of the ignorant multitude of Christians and of their most learned representatives; nor is there any article in that creed which has exercised upon them a greater influence than that which asserts the Resurrection of Christ from the dead.

¹ P. 149.

Lapse of time so far from attenuating this influence serves but to manifest it more widely. Thus Lord Acton in his inaugural lecture as Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, after defining the study of Modern History as the study of the last four centuries, said : " Even this narrow section of history will aid you to see that the action of Christ, who is risen, on mankind whom He redeemed fails not, but increases ".¹

The argument for the occurrence of the Resurrection derived from the historical retrospect has been expressed thus : " Something happened then and there which has changed this world to all succeeding generations. . . . When one stands by the ocean and watches the great waves charging against the rocks, he knows that somewhere far out at sea the winds must have descended, and swept over the depths, though not a breath of air may be astir in the tree-top overhanging the cliff. So in human history every mighty movement which breaks upon our shores must have had a cause, far away perhaps, whose effects we see. If, while we are watching the waves, a log-book should be washed ashore, and we should read from it an account of the descent of a mighty wind upon the face of the

¹ See " Lectures on Modern History," by Lord Acton, p. 12.

deep, then we should know for a certainty, though it might be calm within our horizon, that there had been a storm at sea. Floated down upon the mighty tide of human history we find the record written by men who lived when the power of God swept over human society and stirred it to its depth—this is the direct evidence—and we have also the movements of thought and life still breaking upon our shores—we have the great tide and waves themselves—as the present evidence of the descent of a higher power somewhere in human history. Deny the records . . . but you are met by the advancing wave and that is no deception. Deny the Gospels : but the history itself confronts us : is its own evidence : tells its own story of something supernatural ; . . . something happened over eighteen centuries ago in Judæa, on the morning of the third day, which has changed the whole current and flow of history—men's lives, their homes, the rights of children, the lot of slaves, the position of women, the whole order of society, all things human are taken up into and swept along by a new resistless movement, which still bears upon the crest of its advancing wave the hope of the world's future.”¹

¹“Old Faiths in New Lights,” by Newman Smyth, pp. 155-59.

In considering how far the force of the argument for the Resurrection has been weakened by the length of time which has elapsed since it occurred, it must be admitted that the appeal to tradition, on which early Christians in part relied, can never be so strong for us as it was for them. But on the other hand the argument from history, that is, the argument created by the height of the superstructure built upon the Resurrection as a foundation, is stronger to-day than it ever was. As in the case of a material structure, so in the case of the Christian Church, the higher the building and the longer it has withstood the ravages of time, the more certain do we become that its foundation is secure. To take another illustration, the electric light transmitted by a wire from a distance proves the existence of the dynamo at its farther end, nor does the length of the wire, however great it may be, diminish our belief in the existence of the dynamo ; so the light which has come to us, transmitted through the ages by the Christian Church, helps to establish the reality of the source from which it originated.

M. Lepeaux on one occasion confided to Talleyrand his disappointment at the ill success with which he had met in his attempt to bring into vogue a new religion which he regarded as an improvement on Christianity. He explained

that despite all the efforts of himself and his supporters his propaganda made no way. He asked Talleyrand's advice as to what he was to do. Talleyrand replied that it was indeed difficult to found a new religion, more difficult indeed than could be imagined, so difficult that he hardly knew what to advise. "Still," he said after a moment's reflection, "there is one plan which you might at least try. I should recommend you to be crucified and to rise from the dead on the third day."

Though the argument supplied by history and experience cannot be used to prove the accuracy of any of the details furnished in the Gospel records, it may be used to establish the fact of the Resurrection and may prepare the way for an intelligent study of these records. Professor Maurice, in contrasting the value of human testimony with other evidence, says: "If there is nothing to convince us but human testimony—nothing above it which enables us to test it—what power could it have over any human spirit? There is to me an overpowering evidence for the Resurrection in the concurrence of the testimony through all nature, and in my own being, that Death *must* have been overcome, that it cannot be my master as my downward inclination leads me to think it is, with the

testimony of straightforward honest men : ' We saw Him after He was risen, though we thought the thing too good to be true '. But their testimony without the other could not affect me. I must cast it aside, let those who spoke it have been ever so honest. God's testimony has made man's credible. And so the most civilised part of the world has become a Christendom, and its power of doing any of the works of civilisation—of effecting any works which defy death and assume the victory of life—has been another testimony of the Resurrection, immeasurably stronger than the arguments of all divines and apologists."¹

Whether we are prepared or no to accept the occurrence of the Resurrection as a fact of history, we cannot deny the influence which a belief in it has exercised in the world. We cannot deny that it has brought life and immortality to light as no other belief could conceivably have done ; that it has substituted for the fear of death, for a large portion of the human race, that sure and certain knowledge of God which is eternal life ; that it has permeated our customs, our literature and our language with a glory and a hope which could have been derived from no other source. It is easy to say that these results afford no direct

¹ Life of F. D. Maurice, ii., 450.

evidence that the belief to which they are due is a true one : but as we say this we feel that instinct is a safer guide than logic, and our instinct refuses to admit that the greatest blessings which have come to mankind have been the result of a mistake, or that the story which has transformed the world is a romance.

V.

THE WITNESS OF S. PAUL.

WE have so far been engaged in considering two lines of evidence which indirectly attest the fact of Christ's Resurrection. This indirect testimony appears to us to be of greater value from an evidential standpoint than is the direct attestation of the fact which occurs in the New Testament. For (as has been frequently pointed out by those who do not believe in the Resurrection) it cannot be denied that, with the probable exception of S. John, we have not the written testimony of any eye-witness to the fact of the empty tomb, nor to any appearance of Christ at Jerusalem after the Resurrection. But, although the documentary attestation of the Resurrection is not as complete or direct as we could have wished, it is nevertheless so strong that were the occurrence to which it relates other than unique it would be generally accepted as convincing. Documentary evidence of no mean value is in our hands, and if we set aside the story of the Resurrection as unhistorical

or unworthy of credence, the difficulty of explaining the origin of this evidence is hardly less serious than that of believing the Resurrection itself to have occurred.

The earliest testimony to the fact of the Resurrection which occurs in the New Testament is found in the first of S. Paul's letters which has been preserved—a letter written to the Christians at Thessalonica. The date of the letter is about 51 A.D., that is within twenty-two years of the Resurrection. In the first chapter of this epistle (ver. 10), S. Paul speaks of Jesus as the Son of God and says that God raised Him from the dead. A more detailed reference to the Resurrection is found in the first epistle to the Corinthians, which was written about six years later, that is 57 A.D., or within twenty-eight years of the Resurrection itself.¹

In order to understand the value of S. Paul's witness to the Resurrection of Christ contained in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians it will be necessary to consider the argument there set forth in some detail. The force of this argument has often been misapprehended, owing to a mistaken supposition that it was written in order to prove to the Corinthians the fact of Christ's Re-

¹ *I.e.*, on the assumption that the nativity of Christ took place in B.C. 4 of the current chronology.

resurrection. The writer does not make any attempt to prove the reality of Christ's Resurrection, because it was not denied by those to whom he wrote. What some of them were prepared to deny was the possibility of their own resurrection : and S. Paul endeavours to prove to them that their admission of Christ's Resurrection, which, as he reminds them parenthetically, was attested by numerous eye-witnesses, must logically entail a belief in their own resurrection. His argument is not addressed to those who doubted the Resurrection of Christ, but to those who had received and accepted the Gospel which he had preached to them, which included as one of its essential doctrines the Resurrection of Christ. The actual objection with which he deals is that there is no such thing as a resurrection from the dead.

S. Paul's argument is directed to show that if this objection be valid it would involve the acceptance of a series of conclusions, all of which his readers would regard as inadmissible. The argument is thus a *reductio ad absurdum*. If therefore, he argues, the conclusions to which a denial of the Resurrection of Christ lead are inadmissible, the premises on which they are based must be equally so.

His argument is partly of a negative and partly of a positive character. The negative argument

is briefly this : if there be no Resurrection, and if therefore Christ has not been raised :—

(a) Our preaching and your faith are all empty (*κενὸς*), *i.e.*, void of substance or truth, and the witnesses of the Resurrection are proved to be liars (verses 12-15).

(b) Your faith has been productive of no result (*ματαιά*), and you are still in your sins.

(c) Those who, as you believe, have fallen asleep in Christ, have perished—a statement which suggests the further reflection that, if faith in Christ does not extend beyond this present life, those who possess it are more to be pitied than those who entertain no such hopes as this faith inspires.

(d) The act of baptising on behalf of the dead (in the efficacy of which you believe) is useless.

(e) The willingness of myself and other Christians to suffer and to die on behalf of Christ admits of no reasonable justification, inasmuch as our self-sacrifice can receive no reward hereafter.

On some of the above points a few words must be said.

(b) The argument expressed in the words “if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain : ye are yet in your sins,” has sometimes been interpreted as though the thought in the apostle’s

mind were, If Christ hath not been raised, the penalty which man must pay for sin was not accepted as completely paid, and therefore man can have no assurance that at the final bar of justice he will stand acquitted. This does not seem to us to be the true interpretation of the thought which is in S. Paul's mind. To him the fact that the Lord was raised was chiefly important as establishing the truth of the further statement that the Lord lives. It was because freedom from sin could only be obtained by union with a living Christ, and because the Resurrection was to him the pledge that Christ's risen life could be shared by His followers, that the Resurrection itself seemed to him a fact of vital importance.

(c) The translation in the Authorised Version, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most *miserable*," is seriously misleading. S. Paul would have been the last to affirm that the attempt to reach the Christian ideal of life would tend to make a man miserable, whether or no such ideal should prove to be ultimately attainable. In the Revised Version the original word (ἐλκεϊνότεροι) is more correctly rendered, where we read "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable". A man is not necessarily miserable because he entertains unfounded hopes, but he is deserving

of a pity proportionate to the greatness of the hopes which he entertains; that is proportionate to the disappointment which ultimately awaits him. In the book of Baruch (xxi. 13) we read, "For if there were this life only which here belongs to all men, nothing could be more bitter than this". S. Paul's words have apparently been derived from this passage, or both may have come from a common source.

S. Paul's statement in verse 32, "If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," is difficult to understand, and has often jarred upon the ears of those who have listened to this chapter as it was read in the Burial Service of the English Church. It is inconceivable that a patriotic Jew, the lives of whose ancestors had helped to inspire his own life, and many of whom had lived and died without any expectation of a resurrection, should suggest that if the hope of Christians could not rise above the hope of his forefathers they might as well abandon themselves to the coarse pleasures of their animal appetites. Nor, if such were his argument, could it appeal to us to-day: the strenuous and self-sacrificing life which many an agnostic is living who entertains no hope of a future resurrection, forbids us even for a moment to endorse such an argument. To understand

S. Paul's thought we need to remember the source from which his words are taken. They are taken from Isaiah xxii. 13, and are put into the mouth of the wicked, who when summoned to repent say, "Behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine : let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die". The thought in S. Paul's mind is : If the hope which a belief in Christ's Resurrection has confirmed prove after all to be groundless, it will become as difficult to arouse the careless to repentance to-day as it was to arouse the wicked in Jerusalem in the time of Isaiah ; for they will say to us, as their predecessors said to the prophet of old, " Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die ". We admit that this interpretation of S. Paul's words is not self-evident, but to his readers to whom their context in Isaiah would have been familiar, and who would necessarily have interpreted his argument in the light of this context, they would have been easily intelligible.¹ Even apart from the explanation which a knowledge of the original context affords, S. Paul's own words, which immediately follow, supply the corrective to a misinterpretation of his thought. " Be not deceived," he goes on at once to say, " evil company doth corrupt good

¹ See Appendix A.

manners." The saying is a quotation from the Greek poet Menander, and is intended to warn his readers against the seductive effect of the words which he has quoted in the previous verse.

(*d'*), (*e*) The last two arguments, which are deduced from the custom of baptising "for the dead" and from the willingness of Christians to die on behalf of Christ, do not appeal to us, or help to prove to us the inadmissibility of the premise from which they are deduced, to the same extent as they would have appealed to their first readers.

Our object, however, is not to discuss the comparative force of the arguments which S. Paul employs, so much as to estimate the value of his witness on behalf of the Resurrection, and to appreciate the significance which he attached to the fact of its occurrence. This significance becomes more apparent when we turn to his positive argument, which is contained in the statement (ver. 20) which he afterwards expounds in detail, "Christ has been raised from the dead as the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep".

The argument on which S. Paul lays chief emphasis, and which he clearly regarded as the strongest which could be adduced in support of the doctrine of the general resurrection, is based upon the essential unity which exists between Christ and His followers. This unity, he urges, was typified

by the story of Adam. The Jews believed that Adam had been the means of bringing physical death into the world.¹ To those who shared this belief S. Paul points out that the influence of Christ, whom (as the result of the oral teaching which they had previously received) they were prepared to acknowledge as the antitype of Adam, could not have been less far-reaching than was the influence of Adam, and that as Adam was the first-fruits of death, Christ was the first-fruits of the Resurrection. It may be noted incidentally that the force of the argument does not depend upon the historical accuracy of the details recorded in the Old Testament concerning Adam. Had S. Paul been writing to Gentile readers who were ignorant of the Jewish Scriptures, he would probably have expressed his argument in different terms, and would have urged that because Christ was the representative of mankind His Resurrection must necessarily involve the resurrection of those whom He represented. The thought expressed by S. Paul might have been deduced from Christ's own words, "I am the Resurrection and the life".

An important question which we require to answer in order to appreciate the full force of S. Paul's argument is, What did he believe and

¹ Cf. 2 Esdras iii, 21; iv. 30; vii. 48.

teach in regard to the nature of Christ's Resurrection body? His use of this word "first-fruits" plainly suggests that he regarded Christ's body as the pattern of the resurrection bodies of all Christians, just as the first-fruits of a harvest are a pattern or sample of the rest of the harvest to which they belong. If this be admitted, we may then assume that the apostle's statement in regard to the nature of the resurrection bodies of Christians will help to explain his belief in regard to Christ's Resurrection body. We may feel justified in supposing that S. Paul would have applied to Christ the words which he applies to Christians: *e.g.*, "That which thou sowest is not the body that shall be"¹ (ver. 37), and again, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (ver. 50). These words render it impossible to suppose that S. Paul believed that there was a *material* identity between the Resurrection body of Christ and the body which He possessed before His crucifixion. It has sometimes been urged that both S. Paul and S. Peter believed that the material body of Christ, which prior to the crucifixion was subject to the natural changes which are essential to our conception of a material body, ceased to be subject to these changes at the moment of

¹ See Appendix B.

death. In support of this suggestion we have S. Peter's quotation from Psalm xvi.,¹ "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption," and the parallel reference to the same psalm by S. Paul.² In interpreting these passages, however, we need to remember the Jewish belief, which S. Paul and S. Peter would have inherited, that in no case did corruption commence until the fourth day. The object of their quotation may have been to show that the words of the Psalmist were fulfilled because God raised Christ from the dead before corruption could possibly have commenced. Edersheim writes : "It was the common Jewish idea that corruption commenced on the fourth day, that the drop of gall which had fallen from the sword of the Angel and caused death was then working its effect, and that as the face changed, the soul took its final leave from the resting-place of the body".³

The description of the Transfiguration of Christ may be interpreted as representing what the change from this life to the life beyond death might be in the case of one whose material body was completely interpenetrated by his higher spiritual nature. In this case the

¹ Acts ii. 27.

² Acts xiii. 36 f.

³ "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," ii., 324 f.

Transfiguration of Christ should help us to form some conception of what happened subsequent to His death upon the Cross. S. Paul's statement that he had himself seen Christ, and the evidential value which he attaches to his vision, which cannot have been of a material body, show that as far as concerned his own experience a belief that Christ possessed a material body after His Resurrection was not necessary in order to create a conviction of the reality of His Resurrection.

We have already pointed out that the list of appearances (vv. 2-11) cannot be regarded as a formal attempt on the part of S. Paul to prove the fact of Christ's Resurrection, as the certainty of this fact had not been called in question by his readers. The list of appearances which he gives constituted the account which he had before delivered to them and which he had himself received. It seems natural to suppose that, inasmuch as S. Paul regarded a belief in Christ as impossible apart from a belief in the Resurrection, in his oral teaching (to which he here refers) he would have laid primary, if not exclusive, weight upon the testimony which he had himself received from eye-witnesses. The appearances to which he here refers are :—

1. To Cephas.
2. To "the Twelve".

3. To more than 500 brethren.
4. To James.
5. To all the Apostles.

In the Epistle to the Galatians S. Paul states that three years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem to inquire of Cephas, and that the only other apostle whom he saw there was James. We may reasonably assume that as the result of his intercourse with Peter and James he would have gained from them particulars of the appearances of the Risen Lord which they had themselves witnessed. He would thus have obtained first-hand evidence for four and probably for all of the appearances to which he here refers. In regard to the appearance to more than 500 brethren, S. Paul's words imply that his readers could interrogate for themselves some of those who had witnessed it. They seem also to imply that he had himself done so. The date of S. Paul's conversion is between 33 and 36 A.D. His visit to Jerusalem, where he presumably obtained from eye-witnesses of the Risen Christ the particulars which he afterwards gave to the Corinthians, falls within ten years of the date of the Resurrection.¹

It has often been asserted that the Gospel

¹ Cf. Gal. i. 18, "after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas".

story of the Resurrection was not committed to writing till thirty or forty years after the events recorded, and that this period allows time for the incorporation of details which may be nothing more than traditions. To this it may be replied that we have the testimony, written down within twenty-two years of the event, of the most intellectual and in many respects the best informed of the writers of the New Testament, to the effect that within ten years of the Resurrection he went up to Jerusalem to inquire concerning the Christian faith from those who, as he tells us, had been eye-witnesses of the Risen Christ. We have the further significant fact which is attested by his letters, that after (and, as we may reasonably infer, as the result of) this inquiry, the fact of the Resurrection formed the basis of his whole teaching.

VI.

THE GOSPEL RECORDS.

MODERN criticism of the New Testament tends more and more to accept the hypotheses (1) that S. Mark's is the earliest of the four existing Gospels; (2) that this Gospel or a document practically indistinguishable from S. Mark lies behind S. Matthew and S. Luke. Though these conclusions add additional weight to the evidence afforded by S. Mark's Gospel, they do not materially detract from the independence of the testimony of the other Evangelists. In view of the increased importance which modern criticism attaches to the Gospel of S. Mark, it is the more to be deplored that the portion which has been preserved of the original Gospel ends abruptly (xvi. 8) without furnishing a record of the act of Resurrection or of any appearance of Christ after His Resurrection. Of all the literary losses of the past there is none comparable to the loss of the original ending of S. Mark's Gospel. Could we but recover it we might be in a position

to solve the mystery which surrounds the existing records, concerning which Professor Sanday writes, "whichever way we turn, difficulties meet us which the documents to which we have access do not enable us to remove". Again, he says that "though the belief in the Resurrection arose immediately and suddenly, when we come to details, it would seem that from the first there was a certain amount of confusion which was never wholly cleared up".¹

The last two verses which appear in the original S. Mark contain two statements which though not absolutely inconsistent are nevertheless very difficult to reconcile with the accounts given by S. Matthew. The angel's message to the women, "tell His disciples . . . He goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see Him," clearly implies that the disciples were to start at once for Galilee, and that they would not see the Risen Christ till their arrival there. It seems almost certain that the lost ending of this Gospel contained an account of an appearance to S. Peter and to the rest of the apostles in Galilee, without having mentioned any prior appearance to them at Jerusalem. The further statement in verse 8, "they said nothing to any one," is

¹ Cf. article "Jesus Christ" in Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible".

equally difficult to understand when we compare with it S. Matthew's statement, "they ran to bring His disciples word". The difficulties of reconciling some of the statements contained in the last twelve verses are not so serious, as this fragment was undoubtedly written at a later period¹ and cannot therefore claim the same authority as the original Gospel.

A difficulty in regard to the time at which the Resurrection occurred is raised by S. Matthew's statement that the women came to the tomb "late on the sabbath day". It is impossible to suppose that the writer of the first Gospel, who was writing for Jewish readers, could have intended to convey the impression that the Sabbath extended beyond 6 P.M. on Saturday. Ederheim, referring to this statement, says, "it must remain uncertain, however important, whether the words 'late on the sabbath day' (ὀψὲ σαββάτων) refer to Saturday evening or to Sunday morning".²

It is not our purpose to attempt any detailed examination of the Gospel records of the Resurrection, or to discuss the attempts which have been made to harmonise their story, as we do not think that the impossibility of offering a

¹ Cf. "they went forth and preached everywhere" (ver. 20).

² "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," ii., 630 n.

plausible explanation of their apparent discrepancies can rightly be regarded as disproving the main fact which they attest. Their discrepancies at least prove a certain measure of independence, and three or four independent accounts, albeit differing in important details, are of more value as historical evidence than a fourfold account would be which showed signs of having been intentionally harmonised.

The value of the evidence afforded by the fourth Gospel is not destroyed or very seriously affected by a possible doubt as to its authorship. Nearly all critics are agreed that if it was not written down by S. John, it represents the oral teaching of the apostle and was written down by some one who had been in close contact with him. It is not easy to suggest any reason why S. Matthew omits all reference to an appearance of Christ at Jerusalem after His Resurrection, or why S. Luke contains no reference to any appearance in Galilee; but the positive statements contained in S. John's Gospel that He appeared both at Jerusalem and in Galilee render it impossible to treat them as contradictory witnesses.

The incompleteness of the records is not inconsistent with the primary object with which they were written. For, as Bishop Westcott

says, "it must never be forgotten that the history is not a history of the Resurrection, but a history of the manifestation of the Risen Christ". Again, he says: "That which is incomplete as a history is complete as a Gospel. . . . As a Revelation the incidents preserved in our Gospels are complete, as a history they are most imperfect."¹

Professor Schmiedel in his article on the Resurrection, published in the "Encyclopedia Biblica," raises and answers a question which must present itself to every one who compares the Gospel records of the Resurrection with the account which S. Paul gives in 1 Corinthians xv. We give the question and the answer in his own words: "How could the evangelists possibly have allowed so much that is found in Paul to escape them, if they had been acquainted with his narrative, or even with the tradition which underlies it? The question is easily answered. For a writer who could report an instance in which Jesus had partaken of food (Luke), or in which His wounds had been touched (Luke, John), or who could speak of the empty sepulchre as all four evangelists do, or of appearances of the risen Jesus close to the sepulchre (Matthew, John)—for such a writer and for his readers an accumulation of instances in which Jesus had

¹ "Revelation of the Risen Lord," pp. 4, 6.

merely been seen no longer possessed any very great interest ; and a case even in which He had appeared to five hundred brethren at once would at the time when the Gospels were written, hardly have been considered so important as an appearance to the apostles, whose place in the reverence of the faithful had already come to be very exalted. Even the instance in which Jesus had been merely seen (though) by Peter is only touched on by Luke, not described, plainly because the narrative alongside of the others would be too devoid of colour.”¹

Of the theories which have been put forward to explain the empty tomb on the supposition that the body was not miraculously removed, the most plausible is that suggested by Professor A. Reville of Paris.² He starts with the assumption that the body was removed by those who might naturally have expected to gain most by its disappearance, that is by the leaders of the Sanhedrin. He suggests that they would have been greatly distressed that the body had received an honourable burial at the hands of one of their own members, and that they looked forward with dread to the prospect that the

¹ Article on “Resurrection,” col. 4069 f.

² See “Études critiques sur les antécédents de l’histoire evangelique et la vie de Jesus,” ii., 420 ff.

tomb would become an object of pilgrimage to Christ's followers in Galilee; who would revive the controversies between Him and the Pharisees and would endanger their influence over the people. He further suggests that the leaders of the Sanhedrin bribed the soldiers to remove the body, and that they obtained Pilate's concurrence by representing to him that this was the only means whereby fanatical outbreaks in Jerusalem could be prevented from occurring in the future. If it be objected that after a lapse of six weeks it became the interest of the Sanhedrin to acknowledge their action and to produce the body, Professor Reville would probably urge that by this time such proof could no longer be afforded, and that even if it were possible the leaders of the Sanhedrin would be extremely reluctant to convict themselves of a crime. Moreover they might not unreasonably have hoped that the belief in a resurrection would ere long die out. Although this theory does less violence to the Gospel records than any other of the negative theories which have been advanced, it contains serious improbabilities and seems to us quite inadmissible. It is, however, only fair to point out that the acceptance of this theory is not necessarily incompatible with a belief in the real objective Resurrection of Christ, nor does it im-

pute fraud to the women who first announced the fact that the tomb was empty. A man might conceivably accept this theory and continue to believe every detail connected with the appearances of Christ contained in the New Testament. He would then believe that God overruled the bitter hatred of the Sanhedrin to increase the certainty of the Resurrection by removing that which in a materialistic age would have rendered it impossible for a belief in the Resurrection to have arisen.

The indications which the Gospels afford as to the nature of Christ's Resurrection body harmonise for the most part with that which, as we have seen already, was the teaching of S. Paul. That His Resurrection body was not material¹ is shown in the Gospel records by its transcendence of laws to which, as far as we know, matter is invariably subject. Thus we are told that Christ appeared to two of the dis-

¹ Bishop Westcott after noting that Christ's Resurrection body is not described as containing blood, says: "The significant variation (in S. Luke xxiv. 39) from the common formula 'flesh and blood' must have been at once intelligible to Jews, accustomed to the provisions of the Mosaic ritual: and nothing would have impressed upon them more forcibly the transfiguration of Christ's body than the verbal omission of the element of blood, which was for them the symbol and seat of corruptible life". ("The Gospel of the Resurrection," p. 162 n.)

ciples in another form (*ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ*¹), that He appeared suddenly in a room, the doors of which were closed, and that on several occasions He became suddenly invisible to those who were watching Him, and that on the actual day of the Resurrection He appeared in two distinct and distant places at very short intervals. At the same time He possessed the power of assuming material form, or rather forms, so that He could be not only seen but touched, and could apparently assimilate material food. This last statement seems at first sight more difficult to understand than any other connected with the story of the Resurrection, but in view of the fact that modern science has ceased to believe in the impenetrability of matter, and is seeking to discover in ethereal or electric forces its ultimate constituents, it is becoming less entirely inconceivable that spirit might so control or dominate matter as to be able to cause its disappearance. Matter itself is being resolved by science into something which the popular imagination finds it hard to differentiate from that which is immaterial. Thus Sir Oliver Lodge writes : " Physical science may perhaps be induced in the long run to assert conservation and real existence of

¹ S. Mark xvi. 12: for use of the word *μορφῇ* in the New Testament, cf. Phil. ii. 6 f.

ether and motion (or perhaps only of ether in motion) rather than of matter and energy". It would "allow even the atoms themselves to have their day and cease to be ; being resolved perhaps into electricity, and that into some hitherto unimagined mode of motion of the ether".¹

It has sometimes been suggested that, during the forty days in which Christ appeared to His disciples after His Resurrection, He possessed a body intermediate between the material body which He possessed prior to His death and the spiritual body which He may now possess. Were this hypothesis true we should have to suppose that Christ's Resurrection body was in part material and therefore mortal, a supposition which is clearly opposed to the teaching of S. Paul and is on other grounds inadmissible.

The question has sometimes been asked, Why did not Christ appear to the Pharisees after His Resurrection? The obvious answer is that to have done so would have been to have abandoned the principle whereby He had consistently refused to use His miraculous powers in order to enforce unwilling belief. When on one occasion the Pharisees had asked Him to give them a sign which should remove their unbelief, we read that

¹ Cf. article on "The Immortality of the Soul" in the Hibbert Journal for January, 1908.

“He sighed deeply in his spirit and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given unto this generation.”¹

Moreover we have no reason to suppose that those who were as morally unreceptive as were the Pharisees would have been capable of receiving any impression which could have convinced them of the presence of His non-material resurrection body. Because the Resurrection was primarily a revelation of new truth, it could only appeal to those who were capable of receiving such truth. Moreover, the principle which governed the action of the Risen Lord still holds. The significance, and we might almost say the fact, of Christ's Resurrection can only be appreciated by those who fulfil the condition which was stated by Christ in answer to the inquiry, “How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not unto the world? . . . If a man love me . . . we will come unto him.”²

¹ S. Mark viii. 12, R.V.

² S. John xiv. 22 f.

VII.

LIFE AFTER DEATH.

ANY discussion of the Resurrection of Christ must include some inquiry into what occurred subsequent to His death upon the cross and prior to the dawn of the first Easter Day. Nor can this inquiry be limited to what occurred in the case of Christ alone, but must embrace the experiences of ordinary men, as the experience of Christ and that of all other men should throw a reciprocal light the one upon the other. We do not, however, propose to attempt any general discussion of the conditions attaching to the intermediate state, or to enquire how far this state can be regarded as one of probation or of discipline. An enquiry of this kind lies altogether outside the scope of this book, nor is the writer competent to make such an attempt. Our object is simply to enquire how far the language used by Christ and His apostles in regard to the death and future resurrection of all men may throw light upon the experience of Christ Himself subsequent

to His death upon the cross. Not a few writers who have treated of the intermediate state and have striven to elucidate the conditions attaching to it have drawn many of their deductions from passages which occur in the Old Testament or in the Apocalypse. In both cases the interpretation of the passages which form the basis of their arguments is itself uncertain.

Until nearly the close of the Old Testament period the hope of immortality¹ which the Jews possessed was faint and undefined, and their conception of Sheol, or the place of departed spirits, was almost wholly unattractive. Their thoughts seldom rose above those of the Psalmist² who wrote: "In death no man remembereth Thee, and who will give Thee thanks in Sheol?" "The most devout and spiritually-minded Jews looked forward to Sheol as a place which none could escape, and yet which none could enter without a mournful sinking of heart."³ But if the uncertainty which prevailed in regard to the subject

¹ The writer of the article on the "Immortality of the Soul" in the recent Jewish Encyclopedia says, "the belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation, rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture".

² vi. 5.

³ "The Hope of Immortality," by Bishop Welldon, p. 100.

of immortality, and the mournful conceptions of the life after death which were current in Old Testament times, render it unwise to base dogmatic statements concerning the intermediate state upon isolated texts in the Old Testament, it is equally unsafe to deduce any theory from the figurative language employed in the Apocalypse, the greater part of which admits of no literal interpretation, and a large portion of which is a reproduction of Jewish apocalyptic literature. When however we confine our investigation to the words attributed to Christ Himself, and to those of the writers of the New Testament apart from the Apocalypse, we discover how limited our information is.

Let us first consider the sayings of Christ Himself which throw light either upon His own condition, or upon that of other men immediately after death. The most important statement which we have is that recorded by S. Luke, which is attributed to Christ upon the cross and was addressed by Him to the dying thief. If the words, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," be interpreted in their natural sense—the sense in which the man to whom they were addressed and the bystanders who heard them must have interpreted them—they indicate that Christ anticipated that before the close of that

day, or in other words immediately on the occurrence of death, both He Himself and the thief would be in a place or condition which bore no resemblance to that which the Jews of Christ's time ordinarily assigned to departed spirits. What Paradise meant to the Jews in the time of Christ can be gathered from references to it contained in contemporary or nearly contemporary Jewish literature. In the Slavonic Book of Enoch,¹ written between 1 A.D. and 50 A.D., and again in the second book of Esdras, written perhaps a little later, Paradise is referred to as the final abode of the righteous. In the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, written in the second century B.C., which is translated from an earlier form of that book, it is stated that Enoch and Elijah were admitted to Paradise on leaving this world. The Jewish Midrash on the Psalms says that the dwellers in Paradise see the face of God and are nearer to Him than are the angels. These and many similar statements, which might be quoted, indicate the interpretation which those who heard, or who first read, the words of Christ addressed to the thief must have placed upon them. The word Paradise occurs in two other passages in the New Testament. In 2 Corinthians xii. 4 S. Paul speaks of himself as having been "caught up into Paradise".

¹ Enoch, chaps. viii., xlii. 3-5, etc.

In this passage it is equally impossible to identify Paradise with Sheol. Again, in Revelation ii. 7 we read: "To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God". Here too the words would have an entirely different meaning to that which is intended, if for Paradise we were to substitute the word Hades or Sheol. There are two passages in the New Testament which have seemed to many to render it difficult to assign to these words of Christ the meaning which they naturally bear. The first is S. John xx. 17, where Christ is reported to have said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I have not yet ascended to the Father". If however we believe that Heaven is not a locality but a condition,¹ the statement that Christ had not yet resumed that perfect intercourse with His Father which might render it impossible for His disciples on earth to perceive Him with their physical senses, does not appear to be necessarily

¹ "The change which Christ revealed by the Ascension was not a change of place but a change of state, not local but spiritual" ("The Revelation of the Risen Lord," by Bp. Westcott, p. 160). "It may be that by ascending our Lord did not here mean mounting into the heavens, but took the word as expressing as nearly as might be His becoming free from the limitations of earth and regaining His complete communion with the Father in Heaven" ("The Risen Master," by H. Latham, p. 420).

inconsistent with a literal interpretation of the assurance given to the thief that death would straightway usher him into the life of Paradise, which he would enjoy in the presence of Christ.

The second passage is 1 Peter iii. 18 ff., where we read, "Christ suffered . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit ; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, . . . when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah ". Of the countless explanations of these words which have been offered by commentators none are at all satisfactory. The statement, which is almost certainly founded upon, if it is not a direct quotation from, a Jewish apocalyptic writing, is, possibly, descriptive of one of the results of Christ's death rather than a narrative of an occurrence limited by time or space. The Ethiopic Book of Enoch, with the original of which S. Peter would probably have been familiar, incorporates fragments of an Apocalypse of Noah, which contains reference to the judgment that was to be executed upon those who were alive at the time of the deluge, in view of the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah. It is possible that, if we can recover the rest of the Book of Enoch which was current in S. Peter's time, we may find that his statement is the reproduction of a similar state-

ment in this Book. Thus the mysterious words contained in S. Jude : " Enoch prophesied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones . . . " have been discovered to be a quotation from this same Book of Enoch. In any case in view of the obscurity which attaches to the meaning and origin of S. Peter's statement it is evident that it cannot be relied upon to establish any theory in regard to the intermediate state, which cannot be supported by other unequivocal evidence.

To return to the actual words of Christ. On one occasion the Sadducees brought forward a problem which was based upon the doctrine of the Resurrection of the flesh held by their rivals the Pharisees. Christ first set aside the Pharisees' dogma of a material resurrection which would reproduce the physical conditions attaching to the present life, and then offered to the Sadducees what He Himself described as a proof " that the dead are raised ". The proof consisted of the statement that God, who in the Book of Exodus is described as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is " not the God of the dead but of the living ". It has been suggested that Christ meant the Sadducees to draw the deduction that if the continued existence of the patriarchs were established, their resurrection at some period in the

future would also be established. It is, however, most unlikely that the Sadducees would have been prepared to admit this further deduction ; as at an earlier period, and probably at the time of Christ, there were many who admitted the immortality of the soul but did not believe in any resurrection. If Christ's words are to bear their natural meaning, they imply that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were already enjoying a life fuller and more complete than that which the Jews were accustomed to associate with Sheol. On the other hand, if Christ's argument were only directed to prove the immortality of the soul, it was but the repetition of one with which His hearers would have been already familiar. The fact that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still lived unto God is twice referred to in the fourth Book of Maccabees as constituting an argument for the immortality of the soul.¹

In S. John xi. 24 Martha is represented as saying, " I know that my brother shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day ". The distinctive feature of Christ's reply to these words is the contrast which He draws between this belief, which was the current belief of the ortho-

¹ See 4 Maccabees vii. 19 and xvi. 25. In the latter passage we read, " Those who die on behalf of God live unto God as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ".

dox Jews, and the teaching which He proceeds to give and which is summed up in the statement, "I am the Resurrection and the Life". The words too are of such general import that it is difficult to interpret them as applying to the resurrection of Lazarus in a sense in which they cannot equally be applied to the resurrection of all men. Professor Maurice writes : " S. Paul said that if the Spirit of Christ dwells in us He shall also quicken our mortal bodies. Why not believe that these words are spoken simply and sincerely ; that they represent *facts which have been accomplished*, which are accomplishing themselves every hour? You are weary of words which you have heard from me and others about some final deliverance of the human spirit from its sin and woe. You cannot be too weary of them if they interfere in the least degree with the message, I am the Resurrection and the life, which was spoken once to a woman sorrowing for her brother, which is spoken now by the same voice to every woman sorrowing for brother, father, husband, child : an ever-present resurrection, an ever-present life . . . not a future but an eternal life, the life of God, the life of love, is what Christ tell us of." ¹

There are two passages in S. John's Gospel

¹ " Life of F. D. Maurice," ii., 623.

where indeed the words attributed to Christ might seem to indicate a literal resuscitation of individual men. In chapter v. 28 f. we read: "The hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth . . .". A literal interpretation of these words is however impossible, as they would then imply that the entire man, body, soul and spirit, or at any rate that which constitutes his personality, would be contained in the grave at the last day. As this interpretation is inadmissible, any argument which depends upon a literal interpretation of any part of the statement can only be accepted with hesitation. Three verses earlier in the same account we read, "The hour cometh, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live". The words "and now is" render it at least doubtful whether Christ is here referring to the final resurrection or not. On another occasion, referred to by S. John, Christ more than once repeated the statement, "I will raise him up at the last day".¹ If this statement stood by itself it might seem to countenance the materialistic views in regard to the resurrection which were current amongst the Jews at that time: but when it is set side by side

¹ Chap. vi. 39, 40, 44, 54. Cf. "it is the last hour," 1 John ii. 18.

with Christ's words of rebuke to Martha who had said, "my brother shall rise again at the last day," it does not seem impossible with some modern commentators to regard them as a pledge of final victory rather than as the endorsement of the Jewish belief in regard to the resurrection.

From the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the imagery of which is distinctively Jewish, we may perhaps claim Christ's authority for a belief that memory, recognition and human affection will survive and will continue to exist immediately after death. Possibly too we may infer from the language used in the parable that the spirits of the dead are not allowed to communicate with the living, even to warn them from sin. To deduce, however, any further dogmatic statements from the picture language employed in this parable seems to us most unwise.

We turn now to consider very briefly S. Paul's teaching in regard to an intermediate state. A comparison of passages contained in his earlier and later epistles reveals a considerable development of his teaching in regard to the general resurrection; and this in turn throws light upon his teaching concerning the Resurrection of Christ. In reading S. Paul's writings we need to remember that before he became a Christian, when he was Saul the Pharisee, he had inherited a

belief in a resurrection of the material body¹ and in a resurrection of the just and of the unjust.² Moreover, having been, as he says, "exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers,"³ he must have been well acquainted with the Jewish writings of his time. Amongst these eschatology, or the treatment of the last things (such as death, resurrection and judgment), holds a prominent place. It is evident therefore that a study of these books, the language of which is constantly reflected in S. Paul's Epistles, and which must have had a strong influence upon his mind, is essential if we are to understand his own writings.

In the first of his Epistles which has been preserved, and which he wrote to the Christians of Thessalonica about the year 51 A.D., he contemplated the visible return of Christ as an event which would probably occur within the lifetime of his readers. The number of Christians was then so small that it would not have appeared to them inconceivable that they might all be caught

¹ The expression in Daniel xii. 2, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," which is usually quoted as a proof that the writer of the book of Daniel believed in a literal resurrection from the grave, is of uncertain meaning. Professors Charles and Cheyne interpret "dust of the earth" as equivalent to Sheol, as it apparently is in Psalms xxii. 15 and Job xvii. 16.

² Acts xxiv. 15.

³ Galatians i. 14.

up to meet the Lord in the air. He writes : "Them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first : then we that are alive that are left shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."¹ The imagery which S. Paul here uses is borrowed throughout from existing Jewish literature. Thus the idea that the dead will sleep in the earth until the coming of the Messiah,² the use of a trumpet blown by an archangel to usher in the end,³ and the thought that those who would be alive and remain at the coming of the Messiah might gain an advantage over those who had fallen asleep,⁴ are all found in extant Jewish literature, the

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.

² Cf. 2 Esdras vii. 32 : "and the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her".

³ Cf. 2 Esdras vi. 23 : "and the trumpet shall give a sound, which when every man heareth, they shall be suddenly afraid". See also Apocalypse of Baruch, l. 2.

⁴ Cf. 2 Esdras xiii. 24 ; "know this therefore that they which be left behind are more blessed than they that be dead".

thoughts expressed in which¹ would have been familiar to S. Paul.

The expression "by the word of the Lord" may refer to some direct communication received by S. Paul, or it may refer to the statements of Christ contained in the Gospels that He would come "on the clouds of heaven" and would "send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet". There is no suggestion in this passage that any change would take place in the material bodies of those who should be alive when Christ came.² In the second Book of Esdras, from which many of the expressions here used have apparently been derived, it is stated that the dead will arise in their earthly bodies which will be unchanged. In the same book the writer of it is told by the angel Uriel that he may expect to see the end of the world, "for the world hasteth fast to pass away".³ In reply to his question whether the time that still remained would be more or less than that which had elapsed, he is told that the time that remained would be to the time which has passed as the last drops of a storm

¹ Although 2 Esdras may not have been written till as late as the reign of Domitian, 81-96 A.D., it is a characteristically Jewish work and in its earliest form shows no trace of Christian influence. Hence there is reason to suppose that it represents the Jewish traditions with which S. Paul was familiar.

² See also 1 Thess. v. 23.

³ 2 Esdras iv. 26.

are to the storm which precedes them, or as the smoke is to the hot burning fire which has become extinct.¹

In the account of the final resurrection given in 1 Corinthians xv., which was written about six years later than the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, S. Paul emphasises the necessity of a change taking place, whereby the material would be transformed into a spiritual body. The words "we shall not all sleep" seem to show that he continued to anticipate the probability that he and his readers would be alive at the coming of Christ. There are many statements and expressions in this chapter also to which parallels can be adduced from purely Jewish sources.²

When we pass on to consider S. Paul's doctrine contained in 2 Corinthians iv. and v., it seems possible to trace a distinct development in his teaching. This new teaching may have been given in response to questions which had been asked him by some of the readers of his former letter. In chapter v. he writes, "For we know that

¹ 2 Esdras iv. 45-50.

² See Apocalypse of Baruch, chaps. xlix. to li. For a full discussion of the influence which contemporary Jewish thought had upon S. Paul, see "The Relation of S. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought," by H. S. John Thackeray.

if the earthly house of our tabernacle¹ be dissolved, we have (or, 'we are in possession of') a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked² . . . not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life . . . knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord . . . we are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord."

The several expressions here used and the general tenour of the argument seem equally to imply that death will be immediately followed by participation in a life which will be fuller and more complete than life here can ever become.

¹ The expressions here used were perhaps suggested by Wisdom ix. 19, "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind".

² "It is possible that we may see the germ of this idea of nakedness in the metaphor of the *γυμνὸς κόκκος* (naked grain) in 1 Cor. xv. 37, and that further reflection, or perhaps a question of the Corinthians, had led him to correct the inference to which that metaphor might lead, that the soul was for any length of time to be naked and absent from the Lord" ("The Relation of S. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought," by H. S. J. Thackeray, p. 131).

In the Epistle to the Philippians written about 59 A.D. the desire to obtain this higher life, and the expectation that it will be immediately secured by death, are expressed in still more emphatic language. Thus S. Paul writes, "To me to die is gain. . . . I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for it is very far better."¹ These words clearly indicate that S. Paul anticipated that his death would immediately be followed by close personal intercourse with Christ. It is not possible here to enter upon a discussion as to the change which took place in S. Paul's teaching in regard to the imminence of Christ's coming.² A careful study of the passages which relate to the second coming of Christ and to the resurrection from the dead seems to show that towards the end of his life the apostle ceased to lay emphasis upon the existence of any state corresponding to that to which the Jews gave the name of Sheol,³ and laid greater stress upon

¹ Philippians i. 21-23, R.V.

² It cannot be a matter for surprise that S. Paul or other early Christians found it difficult to deduce from Christ's teaching any certain information in regard to the imminence of His second coming, as He had expressly told His disciples that He did not Himself know when exactly it would take place. Cf. S. Mark xiii. 32: "of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son".

³ See Appendix D.

the life of conscious union with Christ which the individual might enjoy at the moment of death. But whilst doing so he none the less continued to repeat even to the end, that there would be a general resurrection and a universal judgment.¹ This interpretation of the teaching of S. Paul is not inconsistent with the statements in the Apostles' Creed that Christ descended into hell (that is, passed into the state of departed spirits), or the statements in the Nicene Creed that "He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead," and the further statement made by those by whom the Creed is recited, "I look for the resurrection of the dead".² Nor has it any bearing upon the teaching of the Christian Church from the earliest times, that heaven will not be a condition of uniform bliss to be enjoyed by all alike. For the supposition that at the moment of death the follower of Christ may pass into Paradise is not incompatible with the belief that a life of toil and dis-

¹ Cf. judgment of the individual soul as distinguished from the general judgment described in the "Dream of Gerontius". See also Appendix E.

² Bishop Westcott, speaking of the intermediate state of the soul after death and before the Resurrection, says "probably there is something wholly deceptive in our use of words of time, 'before' and 'after,' in such a connection" ("The Gospel of the Resurrection," p. 146 n.).

cipline may await him hereafter in the immediate presence of his Lord. As toil and discipline are the chief means known to us for strengthening or developing human character in this life, so, we may well suppose, will it be in the life beyond death.

The resurrection stands for "the finished condition of humanity," and its final presentation to God as the work of Christ. It stands too for the fruition of eternal life which cannot be enjoyed by men as individuals, but as a corporate whole, and which will only be attained when—to use the figurative language of the Apocalypse—"the holy city" shall come "down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride for her husband".

S. Paul's statement that Christ's Resurrection was the first-fruits of our own would naturally lead us to suppose that if in our case death will be *immediately* followed by entrance into a larger and completer life, the experience of Christ must have been the same. That this was so in the case of Christ, Dr. Milligan believed, as he speaks of the "quicken'd life (of Christ) upon which He entered, in all probability at the moment when His mortal life ended, and which was manifested to believers at His Resurrection". Again, a little later, he speaks of "the glory of a new state which began [in death

and] . . . was afterwards exhibited in the Resurrection".¹

Although the description of death as sleep conveys a partial truth, inasmuch as it suggests rest and refreshment, it represents only one side of the truth. Death might with equal correctness be described as the great awakening. Thus Shelley writes :—²

Peace, peace ! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife.

Much misconception has from time to time been caused by the use of the word eternity as an equivalent for Heaven or for the future life. When a man dies the statement is frequently made that he has passed into eternity. Dr. James Hinton, speaking of the relation subsisting between this life and the next, said : " In the utmost earnestness of belief, I hold that this world is the eternal world,—as much so to spirits in heaven as men upon earth ; and that while we can rise to the true level of the grandeur and glory of this poor seeming life only by hard striving with sense and passion and unbelief, and never can worthily attain to it at all, those that have been

¹ " The Resurrection of Our Lord," p. 255.

² " Adonais."

clothed upon with the house that is from heaven see it with unimpaired vision, know it, live in it, rejoice in it with an intense life and a more vivid apprehension, as well as with a calmer and more unruffled joy than ours. Those words of S. Paul express my entire thought, 'Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon'. To pass into the spiritual is not to be unclothed; it is to be added to, to be made more complete, and that is all. It is by want and loss that we are not in the spiritual."¹

¹ "Life of James Hinton," p. 177.

VIII.

THE RESURRECTION AND MODERN SCIENCE.

THERE is no event recorded in the New Testament to a belief in which certain representatives of physical science have offered a more strenuous opposition than the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Their attitude has not been that of the agnostic who refuses either to affirm or to deny the possibility of its occurrence, on the ground that sufficient data for arriving at a conclusion are not available, but they have in many instances assumed a positive attitude and claimed to be in a position to assert not only that the Resurrection did not take place, but that it could not conceivably have done so. Indications however have been forthcoming within recent years that some of the best accredited representatives of scientific study have abandoned this position of positive antagonism, and are prepared to admit that a closer investigation of the laws which apparently govern the manifestations of human personality renders it increasingly difficult to say

that the Resurrection and appearances of Christ after His death must be regarded as *a priori* impossible. When scientists of world-wide reputation, trained in the strictest school of scientific inquiry, such as Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir Alfred Wallace, declare, as they have done, that they have verified the fact by repeated experiment that ponderable bodies can be moved without physical contact by some hitherto unrecognised force which was brought into play by the action of human will, it is no longer possible to treat with scientific contempt the assertions contained in the Gospels that Christ's material body disappeared from the tomb as the result of a hitherto unrecognised force which was exerted upon it without physical contact. "The philosopher," says a recent writer, "who, antecedently to experience, should venture to pronounce the word 'impossible,' even in the region of pure mathematics, would write himself belated."¹

Sir Oliver Lodge, whose claim to be a representative of scientific research will not be disputed, speaking of the immortality of the soul and of the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection says, "Christianity both by its doctrines and its ceremonies rightly emphasises the material as-

¹ "The Naturalisation of the Supernatural," by F. Podmore, p. 209.

pect of existence. For it is founded upon the idea of Incarnation ; and its belief in some sort of bodily resurrection is based on the idea that every real spiritual existence must have a double aspect—not spiritual alone, nor physical alone, but in some way both. Such an opinion, in a refined form, is common to many systems of philosophy, and is by no means out of harmony with science. . . . Christianity therefore reasonably supplements the mere survival of a discarnate spirit, a homeless wanderer, or melancholy ghost, with the warm and comfortable clothing of something that may legitimately be spoken of as a body : that is to say, it postulates a super-sensually appreciable vehicle or mode of manifestation, fitted to subserve the needs of terrestrial life : an ethereal or other entity, constituting the persistent ‘other aspect’ and fulfilling some of the functions which the atoms of terrestrial matter are constrained to fulfil now.”¹ Speaking of the Gospel records, the same writer repudiates the suggestion that he would wish “to deny the Christian Resurrection,” and says : “The record may be taken as exact, without any need for assuming identity of material particles in the Resurrection body. The Appearances during the

¹ See Article on “The Immortality of the Soul” in the *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1908, p. 294 f.

Forty Days are mysterious, but they can be accepted very much as they stand ; for they agree with our experience of genuine psychical phenomena the world over."¹

In a recent work to which reference has already been made, and which is written from the anti-Christian standpoint, the writer says, "the least evidence on which we ought to believe that a dead person returned to life is the evidence of our own senses".² This statement, which implies that indirect evidence for the occurrence of any event is of less value than, and needs to be supplemented by, the direct evidence which our senses can supply, would not be endorsed by the representatives of modern science. A generation ago many of them would have been prepared to maintain that nothing which we cannot see is real. To-day many are more prepared to say the exact opposite, *viz.* that nothing which we can see is real. If no stronger evidence can be adduced for the Resurrection of Christ than that which our senses might conceivably have supplied, from a scientific point of view at any rate its occurrence could never be established.

There are some who would deny the title

¹ See Letter of Sir Oliver Lodge in the "Guardian," November 18, 1908.

² "The First Easter Dawn," by C. T. Gorham, p. 12.

scientific to the work of the Society for Psychical Research, but as several of the foremost men of science, including the three just quoted, have taken part in its investigations, the tentative conclusions of its leaders which bear upon the question of a resurrection from the dead are at least deserving of attention. In saying this we cordially endorse the words of Professor Barrett, one of the founders of the Society, who writes : "every one outside a lunatic asylum must revolt from the hideous nightmare of a spiritual realm such as is depicted by the quasi-ticket-of-leave ghosts met with in the physical, and form manifestations of a spiritualistic seance".¹ Mr. F. W. H. Myers, a former president of the Society for Psychical Research, who began life as an orthodox Christian, but gradually lost his belief in the Christian faith through his inability to accept the Resurrection of Christ, professed to have regained his belief as a direct result of the psychical investigations in which he had taken part. In the last volume which he wrote he said :—

"I venture on a bold saying, for I predict that in consequence of the new evidence, all reasonable men, a century hence, will believe the Resurrection of Christ, whereas in default of the

¹"On the Threshold of a New World of Thought," by Professor Barrett, F.R.S., p. 96 n.

new evidence, no reasonable men, a century hence, would have believed it. The ground of this forecast is plain enough. Our ever-growing recognition of the continuity, the uniformity of cosmic law, has gradually made of the alleged uniqueness of any incident its almost inevitable refutation. . . . And specially as to that central claim of the soul's life manifested after the body's death, it is plain that this can less and less be supported by remote tradition alone ; that it must more and more be tested by modern experience and inquiry. . . . Had the results of psychical research been purely negative, would not Christian evidence—I do not say Christian emotion, but Christian evidence—have received an overwhelming blow? As a matter of fact—or if you prefer the phrase, in my own personal opinion—our research has led us to results of a quite different type. They have not been negative only, but largely positive. We have shown that, amid much deception and self-deception, fraud and illusion, veritable manifestations do reach us from beyond the grave. The central claim of Christianity is thus confirmed, as never before. . . . There is nothing to hinder the conviction that, though we be all 'the children of the most Highest,' He came nearer than we, by some space by us immeasurable, to that

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which is infinitely far. There is nothing to hinder the devout conviction that He of His own act 'took upon Him the form of a servant,' and was made flesh for our salvation, foreseeing the earthly travail and the eternal crown."¹

Though we may not be prepared to endorse the results which are here claimed for psychical research, it is none the less interesting to note that the tendency of such investigation, as interpreted by one of its chief exponents, is towards the acceptance of the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection.

Although the theory that the material body of Christ was resuscitated, or that His Resurrection body consisted of what we know as matter, has seemed impossible of acceptance to practically all students of natural science, a large number of the leaders of modern scientific research have found it possible to accept the testimony of S. Paul and of the Gospel records that Christ did in a true sense rise again from the dead and appear to His disciples. Professor Macalister, F.R.S., the Professor of Anatomy at Cambridge, recently wrote :² "I cannot see anything incompatible with the modern development of scientific teaching in the fundamental doctrines of Chris-

¹ "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death," p. 351 f.

² See Appendix F.

tianity, and consider that it is only on the basis of a crude and superficial philosophy that any such incompatibility has been supposed to exist. Accordingly it has been my experience that the disbelief in the revelation which God has given in the life and work, death and resurrection of our Saviour, is more prevalent among what I may call the camp-followers of science than amongst those to whom actual scientific work is the business of their lives."

There is much truth in Professor James's statement that "as a rule we disbelieve all facts and theories for which we have no use".¹ The evidence available for the Resurrection of Christ can only appeal strongly to those to whom the fact, if it could be established, would have a significance altogether different from that which any ordinary fact of history can ever possess. "The real basis of our belief in the Resurrection of Christ," writes Dr. Inge, "is a great psychological fact—a spiritual experience. We know that Christ is risen, because, as S. Paul says, we are risen with Him. If this basis is forgotten, the event becomes an isolated occurrence in past history, which from its very uniqueness is unimportant and also impossible to establish."² The objection which is not infre-

¹ "The Will to Believe," p. 10.

² "Contentio Veritatis," p. 87.

quently urged to the admission of evidence of this kind for the truth of any part of the Christian revelation on the ground that it is mainly of a subjective character cannot be sustained ; for, as Professor Romanes (who for twenty-five years professed himself an agnostic) writes, "it is not necessarily true that, even if internal intuition be of divine origin, the illumination thus furnished can only be of evidential value to the individual subject thereof. On the contrary, it may be studied objectively, even if not experienced subjectively ; and ought to be so studied by a pure agnostic desirous of light from any quarter. Even if he does not know it as a noumenon, he can investigate it as a phenomenon. And supposing it to be of divine origin, as its subjects believe, and he has no reason to doubt, he may gain much evidence against its being a mere psychological illusion from identical reports of it in all ages."¹ Again, he writes : "belief is not exclusively founded on objective evidence appealing to reason (opinion), but mainly on subjective evidence appealing to some altogether different faculty (faith). Now whether Christians are right or wrong in what they believe, I hold it as certain as anything can be that the distinction which I have just drawn and which they all im-

¹ "Thoughts on Religion," p. 147 f.

PLICITLY draw for themselves is logically valid. For no one is entitled to deny the possibility of what may be termed an organ of spiritual discernment. In fact to do so would be to vacate the position of pure agnosticism *in toto*—and this even if there were no objective or strictly scientific evidences in favour of such an organ, such as we have in the lives of the saints, and, in a lower degree, in the universality of the religious sentiment. Now if there be such an organ it follows . . . that not only will the main evidences for Christianity be subjective but that they ought to be so.”¹

Attempts have been made for upwards of two thousand years to furnish a logical demonstration of the immortality of the soul, but few would be prepared to claim that this has been accomplished. The most recent and to many minds the strongest proof of immortality which has been suggested is that which is afforded by experimental psychology. The sporadic cases in which the existence of telepathy and of subconscious thought and memory can be proved to exist may be interpreted as indicating that these faculties, which perform no normal functions in this life and may be actually harmful to their possessor, point forward to another sphere of existence in which they will

¹ “Thoughts on Religion,” p. 140.

obtain scope for exercise and development. The well-nigh perfect memory which the subjective or subconscious mind of man has in exceptional cases been proved to possess, and which, if it became a conscious possession, would be an insuperable obstacle to his progress here, renders it easy to conceive how punishments and rewards may be apportioned hereafter, and how human individuality may be preserved.¹ There is, however, one serious difficulty which is raised by almost all arguments that are adduced to prove the immortality of the soul, and in particular by the arguments put forward by Bishop Butler in his "Analogy". The difficulty arises from the fact that with very few exceptions the arguments which are adduced to prove that man will be immortal may also be used to prove that he had a previous existence prior to his birth into this present life. But if it be admitted that man has lived before and under conditions of which he has lost all recollection, it becomes reasonable to suppose that in the state of existence which awaits him he will preserve no recollection of his present life. An immortality, however, which does not involve the retention of memory is hardly to be distinguished from annihilation. Plato met the objection that arguments derived from a con-

¹ For a development of this argument, see "The Evolution of the Soul," by T. J. Hudson, chap. ii.

sideration of the essential characteristics of the soul may equally be used to prove its pre-existence, by the bold assertion, which he puts into the mouth of Socrates, that he (Socrates) could remember his former existence upon earth. Aristotle who was not prepared to accept this assertion, and discussed the immortality of the soul in the light of pure reason, arrives at the conclusion that when a man dies his personality perishes with him.¹

The life of man is bounded by two chasms which lie behind and in front of his present existence. He cannot hope to discover a bridge which may span the chasm that lies behind and which would connect his present life with any previous state of existence. Can he hope to find one which may connect his present life with any life or sphere of existence which may be in front of him? Is there any historical fact or experience which may assure him that a bridge exists? Such a fact and experience is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Apart from a belief in the Resurrection of Christ, faith, love and instinct may essay to cross the dark chasm, but they go unaccompanied by reason, whereas if the fact of His Resurrection can be established, reason demands the acceptance of the Resurrection life as a potential possession of all men.

¹ "De Anima," iii. 5.

IX.

CONCLUSION.

To recapitulate in a few words the argument which we have attempted so far to develop. We have tried to show that if, as a result of a study of the character of Christ which is depicted in the Gospels, we can satisfy ourselves that He always spoke the truth and that He never claimed to possess knowledge which He did not possess, then the fact, which is admitted even by those who do not believe in His Resurrection, that He stated that He would rise again from the dead is the strongest argument for His Resurrection that can be produced. We went on to point out that some epoch-making event occurred on the first Easter Day which has changed the course of the world's history and which brought into existence the Christian Church. That this event was the Resurrection of Christ is asserted by the writers of the New Testament, and their assertion is corroborated by all subsequent history. We then discussed the documentary evidence for the Resur-

rection, and attempted to draw some conclusions as to the nature of Christ's Resurrection body not only from the descriptions of His own Resurrection but from the analogy which, if the teaching contained in the New Testament be correct, may be presumed to exist between His Resurrection body and the bodies which His followers will eventually receive. Lastly we noticed, very briefly, the special difficulties which a belief in the Resurrection involves for the student of modern science, and the attitude of some of the representatives of science towards them.

In addition to those which have been already discussed there are three arguments or considerations which deserve special notice.

1. The first is the attestation to the belief of the early Christians in the fact of the Resurrection, and indirectly to the fact itself, which is furnished by the institution of Sunday. No institution was regarded by the Jews, from whom most of the early Christian converts were obtained, as more certainly divine than was the Sabbath. No stronger proof therefore can be suggested of the genuineness of their belief in the Resurrection of Christ than the fact that they allowed the weekly celebration of this event to supersede the observance of their Sabbath. The

setting apart one day in seven on which to commemorate the Resurrection helps us to understand the significance as well as the importance which Jews and Gentiles alike attached to its occurrence. As victories famous in history have their annual commemoration, so the victory of which the Resurrection was the assurance was judged worthy to have a weekly commemoration. Of the visible effects which followed the spread of a belief in the Resurrection of Christ there is no single one which affords so strong a confirmation of the genuineness of this belief as the acceptance of the Christian Sunday and its substitution for the Jewish Sabbath.

2. There is one argument suggested by the study of psychology, which appeals differently to different minds, and which is best appreciated by us in those rare moments when, by the exercise of intuition rather than of reason, we seem to get into closest touch with the unseen and the infinite, and begin to understand something of the nature of our own personality. This argument is referred to by Bishop Paget, who writes:—

“There is a conviction of our immortality bound up with the exercise of self-conscious thought and self-determined will: whatever difficulty we may at first find in regard to the resurrection of the body, there is surely at least as

much in conceiving how a personal spirit could ever cease to be."¹

It may be urged that the force of this argument can only appeal to a limited number of thoughtful persons, but this fact does not necessarily lessen its cogency. Many people who are otherwise fairly intelligent are quite incapable of appreciating the appeal which a great picture or a great work of literature makes to a limited number of connoisseurs in art and letters, but we do not for this reason discount the force or reality of this appeal. The fact that we do not ourselves possess a seeing eye does not justify us in denying the reality of what others declare to be visible.² Victor Hugo says: "Some men deny the infinite ; some, too, deny the sun ; they are the blind".

To some men there is a time in their life when the vision of God and the knowledge of eternal life comes as an immediate experience,³ with a

¹ "Faculties and Difficulties for Belief and Disbelief," Bishop F. Paget, p. 30.

² "It is humiliating to think how large a proportion of the speculative systems of the world have arisen from no worthier a propension than that which tempts dulness to disbelieve the inspirations of art, ease to see no misery, and the animal faculties to treat as romance the thirst for ideal perfection" ("Types of Ethical Theory," by James Martineau, ii., 10 f.).

³ See the experience described by Tennyson, Appendix G, p. 133.

conviction which is independent of external evidence. They are able then, with all humility but with unhesitating confidence, to adopt for themselves words such as those which Myers puts into the mouth of S. Paul :—

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
 Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny :
 Yea with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest ;
 Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.¹

3. A third argument which is based upon our intuitive recognition of the timeless nature of love, though primarily an argument for immortality, may be treated as a proof that personal identity and self-consciousness will continue without interruption. Such a continuance suggests, if it does not actually necessitate, the possession of a resurrection body. Man's instinct and power of love forbid him, if he believe in a God at all, to limit the scope of this love to his present brief and fickle life. For, inasmuch as the interruption of love is productive of the greatest sorrow which man can know, it is impossible for any one who believes in the existence of God to believe that He has so constituted man that the more he becomes like Him whose nature is Love, the more exposed will he be to the suffering of incurable grief. Love being eternal in its nature

¹ "Saint Paul," by Frederic W. H. Myers, p. 42.

must have an eternal realisation. If God has made us capable of loving each other with a time-less love, it must needs be that when we pass beyond the limits of time love will claim its own again.

The argument for the existence of a future life which can be derived from the instinctive belief that God is good may be illustrated by a scene described by Mrs. Gaskell. A poor factory girl is represented as saying to those around her as she is in the act of dying: "I think if this should be the end of all; and if all I have been born for is just to work my heart and life away in this dreary place, with those mill-noises in my ears for ever, until I could scream out for them to stop and let me have a little peace and quiet, and wi' the fluff filling my lungs, until I thirst to death for one long deep breath o' the clear air, and my mother gone and I never able to tell her again how I loved her, and o' all my troubles—I think, if this life is th' end, and there's no God to wipe away all tears from all eyes, I could go mad".¹

We pass on to allude very briefly to the significance of Christ's Resurrection on the assumption that it can be regarded as an historical fact.

¹ "North and South," pocket ed., pub. by Smith Elder, p. 109.

The Resurrection of Christ was at once (*a*) a vindication of His claim to be the Son of man, (*b*) a demonstration and earnest of human life beyond the grave, and a pledge that good will ultimately triumph over evil.

(*a*) In the first place the Resurrection of Christ may be interpreted as a vindication of His claims to be the Son of man. On two occasions¹ before His death He solemnly declared that as Son of man He would rise again from the dead. If then we can assume the Resurrection to be an historical fact, we may also assume that Christ rose from the dead not as an individual man and not exclusively as the Son of God, but, as He Himself had foretold, as the Son of man. His Resurrection therefore set the seal upon His claim to be the representative Man. It furnished a final proof that His life was not an isolated event in the world's story, but that it was intimately connected with all other human lives. By the act of Resurrection Christ not only became the first-fruits from the dead, but His life was proved to have been the first-fruits of what God intended all men to become. Had He not risen, His life would still have been to us a splendid example, but the key to the mystery which it involved would have been withheld from us.

¹ S. Mark viii. 31; ix. 9.

If the Resurrection of Christ be nothing more than a myth, we may still try to persuade ourselves that man is immortal and that Christ is in the possession of immortal life under conditions of which we can form no conception, but such hopes as we may be able to conjure up can give us little help if our aim be to reproduce the life of the Son of man in our own.

(b) The experience of Christ subsequent to His Resurrection harmonises with what, as we have already seen, is our own intuitive belief in the continuity of work and the continuity of love before and after death. The details relating to the post-resurrection life of Christ show that His work of teaching and of ministering to the wants of His disciples did not end when He died upon the Cross. The conclusion which S. Paul draws at the close of his long argument in support of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians xv. is the natural conclusion to the whole matter. Because Christ has risen, therefore "no work begun can ever pause for death";¹ because by His rising He has given to all life an intelligible meaning, therefore the apostle can say to those to whom he writes: "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the

¹ "Ring and the Book," Pompilia.

Lord". Christ's experience affords too an illustration of the truth which is attested by our own intuition that death will not interrupt love : after as well as before His death we read of the disciple whom Jesus loved.¹ If it be true that Christ lived and died as "very man," and as the representative man, and that death did not destroy the reality of His connection with the human race ; then, as in His case the continuity of work and of love for His friends was not destroyed by death, so, we have every right to suppose, will it be in regard to ourselves, when,

. . . mid the dark, a gleam
Of yet another morning breaks,
And like the hand which ends a dream,
Death, with the might of his sunbeam,
Touches the flesh and the soul awakes.²

We shall better appreciate the change which a belief in the Resurrection of Christ has effected, if we compare the outlook of one who shares the belief of an ancient Greek, or of a present-day agnostic³ with that of a Christian. The former,

¹ Note also the special appearances to S. Peter and to S. James (the Lord's brother ?).

² Browning, "The Flight of the Duchess".

³ Herbert Spencer writes: "Evolution has an impassable limit. . . . A universe of extinct suns round which circle planets devoid of life . . . is the proximate end of the processes everywhere going on" ("First Principles," pp. 440, 472). Contrast the vision of the Christian seer, "There shall be no night there".

does he desire to make any prolonged effort for his own self-culture, or for the good of others, or does he long to develop friendships till they ripen into love, cannot allow himself to forget that the horizon of his work and of his love is bounded by the grave, which, for ought he knows, may be close in front of him.¹ It is only where men have come to believe in a Risen Christ that they have as a general rule come to believe that goodness and truth, purity and justice can never die. In the case of the majority it is vain to bid them seek after a character which demands strenuous endeavour to attain and which is not potentially eternal :

The good, the true, the pure, the just,
Take the charm 'for ever' from them, and they crumble into
dust.²

A good man may derive satisfaction from the thought that others may possibly benefit by his

¹ Cf. Romanes' "Thoughts on Religion," p. 150 f. : "The nature of man without God . . . is thoroughly miserable. . . . I know from experience the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical speculation, and artistic pleasures; but am also aware that even when all are taken together and well sweetened to taste, in respect of consequent reputation, means, social position, etc., the whole concoction is but as high confectionery to a starving man. . . . There is no finality to rest in, while disease and death are always standing in the background."

² "Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After."

labours after he is gone, but as he has no assurance that he will ever see them again, or that he can continue the work that he has begun here, this thought can afford him little inspiration. His only certain possession is his present life. Ere this life end he must complete all that he begins, if his life is to attain any kind of success. And as his life draws towards its natural close, his horizon becomes ever more contracted. The love of others for him can but accentuate his sorrow that he has no right to believe that love can survive death or that he will ever meet again those whom he has learned to love here.

A French writer describes in epigrammatic language the state of mind which a disbelief in a future life renders possible :

La vie est vaine :
 Un peu d'amour,
 Un peu de haine
 Et puis—bon jour !

La vie est brève :
 Un peu d'espoir,
 Un peu de rêve
 Et puis—bon soir !

We may contrast with this description the position and outlook of the man who shares the Christian belief in the Resurrection of Christ. For him death, as ordinarily understood, has no

meaning. His life is bounded by a limitless horizon. He can undertake tasks of self-culture, or set on foot schemes for the help of others, which would take centuries to bring to completion : for his time is spent, and his tasks are undertaken in the power of an endless life. To him may the words be applied :

Others mistrust and say, ' But time escapes :

Live now or never !'

He said, ' What's time ? Leave now for dogs and apes !

Man has Forever.'¹

Death is to him the gate of life which will admit him to a sphere of activity where he will have completer opportunity for developing all that he has begun here. So too in regard to the development of his affections. Human love acquires a new meaning when we write "immortal" before it. Inspired by the knowledge that Christ's love for His friends survived the grave, he can look forward with certainty to a continuance and development of the friendships and love which have begun here. He realises that every chance acquaintanceship which he forms now may develop into a friendship which will last for ever. He can await death with eager expectation, believing that there will then be

¹ "A Grammarian's Funeral."

granted to him the fulfilment of his highest ideals

And to life's day the glorious unknown morrow
That dawns upon eternal love and life.

"Whatever," says Professor Harnack, "may have happened at the grave and in the manner of the appearances, one thing is certain: the grave was the birthplace of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished, that there is a life eternal."¹ As Easter Day comes round each year we repeat in the words of our Anglican liturgy: "Christ by dying hath destroyed death, and by rising again hath restored to us everlasting life".

It is not true to say, as is sometimes said by Christian apologists, that the continuance of a belief in the immortality of the soul depends upon the acceptance of Christ's Resurrection. Such a belief existed amongst the Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, centuries before the time of Christ, and will doubtless continue till the end of time. This pre-Christian belief in a future life, however, differed greatly from that which became current among Christians as the result of what happened on the first Easter morning. Bishop Welldon, speaking of the belief in

¹ "What is Christianity?" p. 161 f.

immortality held by the ancient Greeks, says : " The best and wisest of the ancient Greeks, with the possible exception of a few philosophers such as Socrates, if it had been open to them to choose or refuse the gift of immortality would have refused it. That immortality could be the satisfaction of human desires, or the compensation for human sufferings, or the reward of human virtues, was an idea that did not occur to them and would not have been intelligible to their minds. Immortality did not appear to them as a joyful hope, but as a bad dream, or a painful necessity, or at the best a tolerable fate."¹ The Jews obtained, or developed, a nobler and more definite faith in immortality than any other race, though this belief was of later origin than was the case with many nations, and did not prevail at all generally till the third century before the time of Christ. But even their belief was indefinite and uncertain compared with the sure and certain hope which was the possession of every Christian believer in the early Church.

The resurrection hope became indeed the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity. In

¹ "Hope of Immortality," p. 48. Cf. also Homer, *Od.* xi. 488-91, where Achilles deprecates any reference to death, and says that he would rather be a poor man's slave on earth than reign over all the dead.

the opening scene of Goethe's *Faust* the sceptic who has already raised the poison goblet to his lips is kept from the accomplishment of his purpose by the sound of the Easter bells, which suddenly breaks upon his ear together with the voices of the angel chorus that proclaim "Christ is arisen".¹ It was this hope which supported the early Christians amidst difficulties and persecutions, and which enabled them at last "to greet the unseen with a cheer".² To countless numbers of Christ's followers the motive power of their lives, and their comfort and support in the hour of death, has been faith in the Risen Lord. When Dr. Arnold of Rugby was in the act of dying he was seen "lying still with his hands clasped, his lips moving, and his eyes raised upwards, as if engaged in prayer, when all at once he repeated firmly and earnestly,

¹ As *Faust* lays the goblet down he says :

" I venture not to soar to yonder regions
Whence the glad tidings hither float ;
And yet, from childhood up familiar with the note,
To Life it now renews the old allegiance.

.
" And Memory holds me now with childish feeling,
Back from the last, the solemn way.
Sound on, ye hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild !
My tears gush forth : the Earth takes back her child ! "

—Translation by Bayard Taylor, p. 22.

² Browning's " Epilogue ".

‘And Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed : blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed ’ ”.¹

There are many details connected with the Resurrection of Christ, as well as with our own resurrection and the life which will immediately follow death and precede the general Resurrection, on which neither Revelation nor modern thought can afford us any light. When we stand by the death-bed of one whom we have loved, even as he passes from us the veil which hides this life from the life to which he has passed seems to become for the moment almost transparent : but as we vainly endeavour to follow in something more than thought, the very certainty of our knowledge that only a thin veil hides the one whom we have lost from our view, serves but to emphasise the restrictions which are imposed upon us by our material bodies, and which baffle our utmost endeavours to penetrate the mystery which lies behind that veil.

Demonstrative evidence for the Resurrection of Christ is from the nature of the case impossible. As with all fundamental truth, certainty can only come to us as a revelation of “The Alone to the alone,” but if after honestly weighing the

¹ “Life of Dr. Arnold,” ii., 282.

cumulative evidence, which is available for the fact of His Resurrection, we are prepared to make the venture of faith which shall unite us to a Risen Christ, we may believe that as we close our eyes in death we shall hear the words of our Risen Lord whispered in our ears, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise".

APPENDIX A.

“IF THE DEAD RISE NOT, LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR
TO-MORROW WE DIE.”

THE danger that serious misunderstanding may be caused by the public reading of these words in the Burial Service is illustrated by the following extract from one of Professor Huxley's letters written in 1860.

“As I stood behind the coffin of my little son the other day, with my mind bent on anything but disputation, the officiating minister read, as a part of his duty, the words, ‘If the dead rise not again, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die’. I cannot tell you how inexpressibly they shocked me. Paul had neither wife nor child, or he must have known that his alternative involved a blasphemy against all that was best and noblest in human nature. I could have laughed with scorn. What! because I am face to face with irreparable loss, because I have given back to the source from whence it came, the cause of a great happiness, still retaining through all my life the blessings which have sprung and will spring from that cause, I am to renounce my manhood, and, howling, grovel in besti-

ality? Why the very apes know better, and if you shoot their young, the poor brutes grieve their grief out and do not immediately seek distraction in a gorge. . . . For long years I have been slowly and painfully climbing, with many a fall, towards better things. And when I look back, what do I find to have been the agents of my redemption? The hope of immortality or of future reward? I can honestly say that for these fourteen years such a consideration has not entered my head."¹

For a note on the true meaning of the words, see page 55.

¹"Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley," i., 318.

APPENDIX B.

“IT IS SOWN A NATURAL BODY.”

THESE words have frequently been interpreted as though they applied to the act of burial in a grave. We believe that this interpretation is incorrect and that its acceptance has given rise to many mistaken notions in regard to the nature of the Resurrection. Dean Bernard referring to these words says:—

“What does S. Paul intend to illustrate by the image of the sowing of the seed? This is a crucial question; for the prevalent misconceptions of his doctrine of the Resurrection of the body may, as it seems, be traced to a misinterpretation of this figure. Most commentators, both ancient and modern, have assumed that the apostle means to illustrate the burial of a corpse by the figure of the sowing of a seed. Even Bengel takes this view. Of *σπείρεται* he says, ‘verbum amoenissimum *pro sepultura*’. And the association of S. Paul’s words with the sublime Office for the Burial of the Dead in the Church of England has done much to confirm this interpretation of his language. It may seem presumptuous to express doubts as to the value

of an exegesis which can claim such varied authority. But, in fact, there is no single allusion to the act of sepulture from the beginning to the end of I Corinthians xv.; nor does S. Paul lay the slightest stress upon burial, or upon any other means of disposing of the corpses of the departed.

“Let us look into the language he uses. His opening words, when scrutinised, will be seen to forbid any exegesis which equates *sowing* with *burial*. ‘That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die’ (*ver.* 36). In the world of nature, that is, there are three stages in the transformation of a seed, *viz.*, *Sowing*, *Dying*, *Quickening*; and they succeed each other in this order. The seed is sown *before* it dies, and it dies *before* it is quickened. Sowing *precedes* death in the operations of nature. But the burial of a corpse comes *after* death. There is no analogy between the sowing of a seed which *goes before* the death of the seed, and the burial of a human body which *comes after* the death of that body. We must then put out of our minds the idea that the burial of the dead is comparable to the sowing of the seed, if we are to comfort ourselves with the splendid words, ‘That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die’. S. Paul’s image is the same as that which is presented in the saying of Christ to the Greeks, ‘Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth fruit’;¹ but in neither passage has the image anything to do with sepulture or burial of the dead, and in both passages the central thought

¹ S. John xii. 24.

is the same, that the true life of the seed of human faculty can only be reached through death."¹

The same interpretation was adopted by Dr. Milligan in his latest work. He wrote, "All the earthly course of man from its beginning to its end, from the cradle to the grave, is the time of his being sown. No other interpretation does justice to the context. The terms 'dishonour' and 'weakness' are too wide to find a suitable application to the body only when it is committed to the dust; while it would be extremely unnatural to call it a *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, a body with a sensuous life, at the very time when that life has left it. . . . The Apostle has no thought of any positive dishonour inflicted upon the body during the present life. . . . The true parallel to the thought is to be found in the contrast presented to us in the Epistle to the Philippians between the body of our humiliation which is to be fashioned anew and the body of Christ's glory to which it is to be conformed."²

To quote the words of one other recent writer, Professor Charles says: "The sowing cannot mean the burying of the body in the grave: such a meaning of 'sow' (*σπείρειν*) is wholly unattested; it is rather the placing the vital principle or spirit in its material environment here on earth, where the spirit of man like a seed, gathers and fashions its body from the materials around it. The life of man in this world

¹ See article by J. H. Bernard, Dean of S. Patrick's, Dublin, in "Expositor," 1908, p. 414 ff.

² "The Resurrection of the Dead," by Dr. W. Milligan, pp. 142, 144.

from its first appearance to the obsequies that attest its departing is analogous to the sowing of the seed in the earth."¹

¹ "Encyclopedia Biblica," article on Eschatology by Professor Charles, col. 1384.

APPENDIX C.

THE ANGELS AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST.

DR. LATHAM inclined to the supposition that the "two men" whom the women found at the tomb and who announced to them the fact of the Resurrection (S. Luke xxiv.), as also the "two men in white apparel" (Acts i.) who appeared at the time of the Ascension, were not angels but ordinary men, who were either Essenes or priests. He writes: "It is a law, not violated as far as I know, that superhuman intervention does not take place unless it is required in order to affect something essential which could not be affected without it. . . . Dr. Edersheim shows that our Lord's teaching about angels differs wholly from that of the Jews. . . . I have dwelt on the existence of a body of Judæan believers who 'followed not' with the Galilean disciples, and I have pointed to the importance of the circumstance that 'a great company of the priests were obedient unto the faith'. The Essenes of whom Josephus so frequently speaks, had a settlement in Peræa near where Jesus had spent the last winter with His disciples. That the priests and probably their scholars and certainly the Essenes were marked by wearing white clothing there is evidence to

show. I can well understand that there should have been men at Jerusalem disposed to listen to our Lord's words, who would have caught eagerly at the very points which puzzled the Galileans, such as the ideas that the victory should come by suffering and that the Messiah should rise again. These persons might have kept in close communication with other Judæan disciples, but may have shrunk from attaching themselves to a company of Galileans who spoke a provincial dialect . . . in this case the words 'Ye men of Galilee' would come naturally from their lips. Such persons might have heard that our Lord on the way to the Mount of Olives shortly before His crucifixion, had said to the disciples, 'But after that I am risen I will go before you into Galilee'. These words are repeated by the young man in the tomb. . . . If these visitants were young men of an 'advanced' section of the priestly school, I can suppose that they scrutinised the grave clothes, and if they found that these had been undisturbed and that the dry spice was lying in the folds, it would have helped them to the conclusion that the Lord had risen in a mysterious manner out of the grave clothes. . . . In the first century many had come to think it derogatory to the majesty of our Lord that He should be left unattended on such an occasion as this, and those so thinking would have caught at the idea that these visitants were angels, in order to supply the defect. S. Mark and S. Luke, however, who represent S. Peter and S. Paul, speak of them as 'men'. . . . The matter is one of history, not of religious faith." ¹

¹ "The Risen Master," by H. Latham, p. 418 f.

APPENDIX D.

THE USE OF THE WORD SHEOL (HADES).

THE Hebrew word Sheol (Greek, Hades) underwent considerable changes of meaning. In the Old Testament it is a place to which all must come (Job vii. 9), but where existence is joyless and without any point of contact with God or with human interests (Pss. vi. 5, xxx. 9 ; Is. xxxviii. 11, 18). This view prevailed till the second century B.C., when Sheol came to be regarded as a place where the good were separated from the wicked (*cf.* Enoch xxii. 51 and S. Lc. xvi. 22), and which the righteous, but not the wicked, would leave at the Resurrection. In later time it no longer signified the intermediate state of the righteous and of the wicked, but came to be used of the abode of the wicked only, either as their preliminary abode (*cf.* Rev. i. 18, vi. 8, xx. 13, 14) or as their final one (*cf.* Enoch lxiii. 10, xcix. 11, ciii. 7).

For a full discussion of the Jewish belief in regard to Sheol, see "A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism and in Christianity," by Professor R. H. Charles.

APPENDIX E.

THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

SPEAKING of the relation which exists between this present life and the final judgment, Dr. T. Munger says: "We talk about going to heaven or hell, but Christ speaks of eternal life. We transport the matter into some future world: Christ puts it into the hour that now is. It is the devastating mistake of ages of imperfect faith that the emphasis and crisis of life is carried forward into the next world. . . . There is no juster word used amongst men than *probation*, and none more perverted. Life is indeed probation, but the judgment that decides is in perpetual session; not for one moment is it adjourned; every hour it renders the awards that angels fulfil; daily and for ever does the Christ of humanity judge according to the deeds done in this present life of humanity, and send to right or left hand destinies. . . . There is nothing in the way of consequence to be awaited that is not now enacting, no sweetness that may not now be tasted, no bitterness that is not now felt. What comes after will be but the increment of what now is, for even now we are in the eternal world" ("The Freedom of Faith," p. 285 f.).

APPENDIX F.

ATTITUDE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF MODERN SCIENCE TOWARDS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

IN a pamphlet entitled "The Views of Modern Science,"¹ the writer (Rev. G. T. Manley), himself a senior wrangler at Cambridge, enumerates the names of twelve men "who have founded or revolutionised some branch of Natural Science". He writes:—

"In the realm of Mathematical Physics there is no greater name, after that of the great Newton, than Clerk Maxwell. In Astronomy that of Herschel perhaps stands first, though Professor Adams also claims a high place. Boyle is known as the 'Father of modern Chemistry,' and after him perhaps Dalton. In the modern science of Biology none is so well known as Darwin. In Physiology and Geology no names stand out so pre-eminently as those I have mentioned, but the claims of Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform, and of Professor Adam Sedgwick, the geologist, rival those of any other. If we add the names of Young, who was mainly instrumental in establishing

¹ Published by the Church Missionary Society, price 1d.

the undulatory theory of Light, Joule, who contributed so largely to prove the Conservation of Energy, and Faraday, already mentioned, our list of sciences is complete.

"There are here twelve names. Of these, eleven are men whose deep Christian belief has been shown by their writings and their lives: some, like Newton, spent their money in purchasing and distributing Bibles among the poor; some, like Herschel, spent their intellectual power on collecting evidences for the Christian faith; some, like Faraday, spent their energies in the external work of the Christian Church; and one and all spent their lives in the service of Jesus Christ, humbly taking up their Cross and following after Him.

"The only other name is that of a Fellow of my own College, Charles Darwin, and whether he was a Christian or not, I am unable to say. But I have read nothing in his scientific works contrary to Christianity, and on the only subject where there seems to be a point of contact, namely, the existence of a Creator, he most definitely allies himself with the Christian view."

To this testimony we may add that of Professor Romanes, who wrote: "Of all intellectual pursuits that of mathematical research is the most exact, as well as the most exclusive in its demand upon the powers of reason, hence as a class the men who have achieved highest eminence in that pursuit may be fairly taken as the fittest representatives of our species in respect of the faculty of pure reason. . . . If we look to the greatest mathematicians in the world's history, we find Kepler and Newton as Christians. . . . When I was at

Cambridge there was a galaxy of genius in that department emanating from that place such as had never before been equalled. And the curious thing in our present connection is that all the most illustrious names were ranged on the side of orthodoxy. Sir W. Thomson, Clerk Maxwell and Cayley—not to mention a number of lesser lights, such as Routh, Todhunter, Ferrers, etc.—were all avowed Christians.”¹

To this list we ought to add the name of Sir George Gabriel Stokes.

¹“Thoughts on Religion,” p. 136 f.

APPENDIX G.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AS AN IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE.

"MY most passionate desire is to have a clearer and fuller vision of God. . . . A kind of waking trance I have frequently had, quite up from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has generally come upon me through repeating my own name two or three times to myself silently, till all at once, as it were out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility" ("Life of Lord Tennyson," p. 268).

Another writes: "When I get quite quiet, and my mind is sane, and my conscience at rest, when I almost stop thinking, and listen, I am quite sure that a Personal Being comes to me, and, as He comes, brings some of His own life to flow into my life. I am also sure that with Him come those who live in Him, that all whom

I have known or know, and longed or long to know better, who were worth knowing, are near me, are, if I let them, living their lives in my life, making me what I should not be without them. These are facts of which, I think I may say, I have more certainty in the best moments of my life than I have now that Switzerland exists" ("Letters to His Friends," by Forbes Robinson, p. 72).

Dr. R. W. Dale describes the experience of a friend of his who said to him: "One Sunday afternoon I went out into the country for a stroll. It was summer, and after walking for a few miles I lay down on the side of a hill. I saw, stretching to the distant horizon, meadows and orchards and cornfields: the cloudless skies were gloriously blue and the sun was flooding earth and heaven with splendour. The wonderful beauty filled me with excitement and delight. And then suddenly through all that I saw, there came the very glory of God. I knew that He was there. His presence, His power and His goodness took possession of me and held me for hours." Dr. Dale adds: "The effect upon him of the great revelation might have been described in lines taken from Wordsworth's 'Excursion':—

In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God
Thought was not: in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed: he proffered no request:
Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the Power
That made him: it was blessedness and love.

This experience has been the experience of multi-

tudes of men. Within and behind all visible and transitory things they have discovered, they have felt, the power of an unseen and eternal Presence. They can give no account of how they became conscious that the august Presence was there, but they know it.

"That they are unable to explain how they knew it does not invalidate the trustworthiness of the experience. There are other and more common experiences of which no explanation seems to be possible. . . . There are such relations between ourselves on the one hand and God on the other, that in hours of vision we discover behind and within the greatness of the material universe a diviner greatness and a diviner glory. How the discovery is made we cannot tell, but its reality is absolutely certain. We are in the immediate Presence of the Eternal" ("Christian Doctrine: a series of discourses," pp. 10-13).

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